THE UK'S FIRST GAMES ONLY PC MAGAZINE

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OFTWARE!

September 1993 Issue 6 £3.95

PC ZONE

100% GAMES

THE MAGAZINE THAT TAKES GAMES APART...

770967 822007 04

THE MOTHER OF ALL FLIGHT SIMS

TORNADO

YOU'LL KILL FOR IT!!!

PC ZONE

CHECKED FOR ALL KNOWN VIRUSES

DISK 1

Full disk instructions on page 10

VGA only
Mouse recommended

SIMON THE SORCERER

©PDQ/Adventuresoft

An exclusive, playable adventure demo from the creators of ELVIRA: MISTRESS OF THE DARK

No Disk?
Then ask your newsagent to give you one.

PC ZONE

CHECKED FOR ALL KNOWN VIRUSES

DISK 2

Full disk instructions on page 10

VGA only

Electrobody

A complete, shocking platform adventure from Germany

+ A TON OF REL HOT shareware

No Disk?
Then ask your newsagent to give you one.

WIN!

CD-ROM UPGRADE WORTH £MILLIONS!
(600 QUID, ACTUALLY)

EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW!

IndyCar Racing

TAKE MANSELL TO THE CLEANERS

BURN BABY BURN

IT'S FAST,

IT'S DANGEROUS...

IT'S ILLEGAL!

It's the ultimate road race. It thunders through six European territories and bullets accross the U.S.A. It's not just a head-to-head between happy snappin', joy riding, boy racers... this is seriously hot competition against the meanest drivers on the tarmac. Beef up your hatch-back to enhance the speed and handling, plan your route and burn off the bizzies. So fire up your engine and pump up the gas for some fearsomely dangerous road racing. BURNING RUBBER... the sweet smell of victory.

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September 1993
Issue Six

PC ZONE

100% GAMES

Paul Lakin *The Editor*

dir.ectory

If you're serious about playing video games, but you still have doubts about the effectiveness of the PC as a games machine, then I would recommend you take a look at the list of games we've reviewed this issue. You can't get games more different than *Blade of Destiny* and *Pinball Dreams*. The range this month is astonishing. What other machine, be it a console or a computer, can run heavyweight flight simulations like *Tornado* one minute, and simple platform games like *Prehistorik 2* the next? What other machine can be continually upgraded and enhanced without making your existing games collection obsolete? The fact of the matter is, the PC has truly come of age as a games machine, and that means that we dedicated PC games players have plenty to look forward to.

REVIEWS

22 Tornado

IS THIS THE VERY BEST Flight Simulation ever to be created on a humble PC? Only veteran pilot Duncan MacDonald has the bottle to fly it to the limits and find out.

28 Sensible Soccer

FOOTBALL FANATICS HAVE been desperately awaiting it for months. We tackle the PC conversion of the greatest football sim in the world and reveal whether its a top scorer or a bench job.

32 Open Golf

THERE'S ALREADY SOME tough competition for Ocean's new golf game. Tee up with us as we determine its handicap.

36 Lotus III: The Ultimate Challenge

PROBABLY THE ONLY opportunity you'll get to drive a five figure luxury sports car like a maniac, but is it as thrilling as it sounds?

38 Rags to Riches

MARK BURGESS DEMONSTRATES that even high-flying, wheeling and dealing city types occasionally have to borrow a tenner from their mums.

43 Blue Force

JIM WALLS, THE EX-POLICE officer who gave us the Sierra's successful *Police Quest* series, is back on patrol again, this time with new boys in blue, Tsunami

46 Blade of Destiny

THEY HAVE BEEN CALLING it the ultimate hardcore role-playing game. Who better then, to give it the acid test, than Andy 'Call Me Shadowsilk' Butcher.

50 Flashback

WE EXPERIENCE A STRANGE sense of déjà vu when we explore this futuristic *Prince of Persia* playalike from Delphine.

56 Return of the Phantom

HE'S BACK IN A NEW GRAPHIC adventure from the makers of Rex Nebular. He's horrendously disfigured. He stalks the catacombs beneath the Opera House. He'll kill and maim for his true love. And his name is... er... Erik!

62 Pinball Dreams

MARK BURGESS RECALLS HIS misspent youth in seedy seaside coffee bars: an unlit fag in his mouth, a cold cappuccino on the counter, a chick on each arm, and a throbbing pinball machine before him.

64 Monopoly

THERE WAS LIFE BEFORE Trivial Pursuit, and it was Monopoly. Waddington's classic makes a comeback via the PC.

66 Day of the Tentacle

COME WITH US AS WE RETURN to Maniac Mansion – the domain of mad scientists, things that go bump in the night and mad mutant tentacles of course.

70 Prehistorik 2

WHAT CAN WE POSSIBLY SAY about this one, other than to confirm that it's a prehistoric platform game?

72 Fields of Glory

FED UP OF WARGAMES that look dull and two-dimensional? So are MicroProse, and so they've come up with the best looking soldier simulator yet.

76 Caesar's Palace

WE FAILED TO GET RICH with *Rags to Riches*. We couldn't make a mint with Monopoly. Surely we can capture the cash at Caesar's Palace? Nope.

COVER GAME: TORNADO P22

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PART 2

dir.ectory

Win a fab Multimedia Level 2 Upgrade kit (worth hundreds of pounds) by filling in our Reader's Survey on page 78.

BLUEPRINTS

12 IndyCar Racing

PAPYRUS, THE TEAM THAT brought us *Indy 500*, is set to repeat its earlier success with a brand new all-singing, all-dancing Indianapolis simulation. Tim Ponting takes it for an exclusive early spin.

18 Jurassic Park

THANKS TO ITS ONLY GETTING a PG rating, Paul Lakin's mum lets him go dinosaur hunting in Ocean's forthcoming blockbuster, in which he discovers that it is still possible to produce a good game of a good film.

FEATURES

88 War & Pieces

WAR... WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR? Andrew Wright doesn't really know, but he does know a thing or three about PC wargames. Here he shares a few strategic insights into the best and worst aspects of computer combat.

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6 Bulletin

THE FIRST NEWS AND PICTURES of Microsoft's *Flight Simulator 5*, plus *Star Trek* revisited, news of *Dungeon Master 2* and how you could soon be playing the likes of *Sensible Soccer* on prime time television.

10 Cover Disk

A STUNNING, PLAYABLE AND exclusive demo of *Simon the Sorcerer?* What more could we possibly bring you? Turn to these pages to find out.

60 Competition

WE'VE GOT TEN REVELL CD ROM Motor Stars kits to give away, each with a free Porsche, and all you have to do to get one is answer a few easy peasy questions.

78 Competition/Readers Survey

VE HAVE VAYS OF MAKING YOU talk and filling out our Reader Survey, and one them is the chance to win a few hundred quids worth of Multimedia Level 2 upgrade kit from Westpoint Creative.

82 Bargain.Bin

THE IMMORTAL FOR A TENNER? Get away. *Wing Commander, Elite Plus* and *Megatraveller 1* in the same box? You're having me on sunshine.

92 Bits & PCs

MARK 'DOCTOR PC' BURGESS resuscitates a user having a DR DOS 6 attack and performs major surgery on D/A converters. Phew!

94 Troubleshooter

SPOILED BY THE TruePlayers™ this month are *Eric the Unready, Freddy Pharkas* and a bit more of *Shadow of the Comet*, The HackMasters™ fight back with various cheats for the likes of *Prince of Persia II* and *Space Hulk*.

105 Off the Boards

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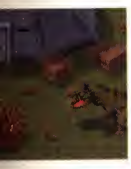
NOBODY COULD POSSIBLY be afraid of Windows could they? Somebody could, and he's going to tell you why!



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Dennis

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LANDS OF LORE

THE THRONE OF CHAOS

Legend has it that a Fantasy Role Playing Adventure like no other will come to pass. It will set new standards with its sheer scale. Its elaborate art, animation, discerning use of speech, and special effects will be talked about for years to come.

Now the legend is reality...

Lands of Lore: The Throne of Chaos from Westwood Studios, the talent behind Eye of the Beholder I &II.

Available for IBM PC and Compatibles

Westwood STUDIOS

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Virgin GAMES

Bulletin

No news is good news, they say. In which case these pages will make very sad reading since news is what they're crammed with. All the latest from the world of PC games.

At last the serious flight sim gets some serious graphics as Flight Simulator 5 flies into the '90s.

Microsoft flies in astounding new simulator

Microsoft's ever popular *Flight Simulator* has finally been given the radical refit its fans have long been crying out for. The most evident improvement in *Flight Simulator 5* is the stunning high-resolution graphics, but Microsoft has also added a range of other features, including:

1. A new latitude and longitude system that helps the player locate destinations and current location in flight.
2. A 'Land Me' feature, which helps inexperienced pilots complete flights successfully (without crashing) while observing the basics of landing an aircraft.
3. Realistic sound for instrument use, approaching objects and crashes.
4. Scenery that expands in detail as the aircraft approaches specific areas of interest.
5. A new weather system feature that gives players control over the weather they will encounter in-flight.

Additionally, the player may choose to encounter other air traffic and be visited by the airport fuel truck upon landing after a long flight.

Two new scenery packs will also be available for use with the new version of *Flight Simulator*. *Microsoft Paris* and *Microsoft New York* offer vivid graphic realism to further enhance the flight experience.

Vektor Grafix' *Shuttle* is about to lose its monopoly in the tiny field of serious space simulations when Microsoft applies its Flight Simulator technology to *Space Simulator*. In order to achieve an authentic space simulation, Microsoft consulted a variety of sources, making use of published geological and astronomical documents and data gathered from the Voyager, Magellan, Viking and Mariner space flights, Microsoft also sought input from NASA. The end result is an entertaining and educational product with outstanding photo-realistic graphics, different ways to navigate and experience space and a vast array of planets and other heavenly objects to explore.

These products are expected to be published in the UK at the end of the summer, although exact release dates and prices have yet to be set.

Subwar 2050

UNSURPRISINGLY, *Subwar 2050* is set in the year 2050 aboard a submarine. However the plot of this futuristic sim is another of the increasingly popular corporations ruling the world scenarios, where corporate wars are a perfectly acceptable business practice. A combination of high tech machinery and underwater dogfights more akin to the air combat of World War One make *Subwar 2050* one of the autumn's more intriguing prospects.

Publisher: MicroProse **Out:** Oct **Price:** tba

Railroad Tycoon Deluxe

For fans of Sid Meier's *Railroad Tycoon*, MicroProse are releasing some more. This upgrade contains new, enhanced graphics – such as South America and Africa – and sound plus eleven new trains. Owners of the original will be able to upgrade for £19.99 if they return their original disks.

Publisher: MicroProse **Out:** Late Aug **Price:** £39.99

(Top) The Pro Audio Studio 16 sound card. (Right) The Pro 16 Multimedia System II.

A multi-media vision

THE NEWEST PLAYER in the Multimedia stakes is Californian company Media Vision. The company's first foray into the UK PC market was with its Pro Audio Spectrum 16 sound card. Now Media Vision is looking to expand its penetration with the launch of a new sound card and two multimedia kits. The Pro Audio Studio 16 sound system is based on the Pro Audio Spectrum 16 and includes a 300 word voice recognition system with computer-mounted microphone.

In common with many sound cards, the MIDI port doubles as a joystick port, and the card also carries a SCSI CD ROM interface. Software supplied includes a quick start installation program and multimedia guided tour, *ExecuVoice* voice recognition software, *Monologue for Windows*, a text-to-speech package, *MIDIsoft Recording Session*, a Windows based MIDI sequencer, and *Sound Impressions*, a professional digital audio editing package.

The two multimedia kits include the Pro AudioSpectrum 16 sound card, but the Pro 16 Multimedia system is supplied with a double speed NEC model 84JD-1 CD ROM drive (300 kilobytes per second data rate, 250 milliseconds access times), eight CD ROM titles and MIDI sequencing software, while the Fusion Double CD 16 upgrade kit includes a double speed CD ROM drive (300 kilobytes per second data rate, 350 milliseconds access time) and four bundled CD ROM titles including Virgin's *The 7th Guest*. Both CD ROM drives have multi-session capabilities, enabling them to read Photo CDs, and both kits comply with the MPC level 2 specification.

The Pro AudioStudio 16 card is priced at £265, the Fusion Double CD 16 at £599 and the Pro 16 Multimedia at £799. For further details: Phone Ingram Micro on 0908 260160, Gem on 0279 412441 or OmniMedia on 071-410 9191.

Joystick splitter

In issue four Mark said that he'd never seen a joystick splitter for the PC and would like to know what they looked like. Here, courtesy of Computermate, is what they look like. A joystick splitter will allow you to have an analogue and a digital joystick connected to your PC. No more changing over as you switch from platform games to flight sims. This one costs about a tenner. Next month Mark says 'I've never seen a 486DX2 with a gigabyte hard disk', and waits for the postman. Computermate Supplies Ltd are at The Wheel, Robin Way, Cuffley, Hertfordshire, EN6 4QB and on 0707 875757. We don't know what Mark is on.

The Splat! Mat – Warning: this mouse mat may be offensive to PC owners with sophisticated tastes.

Dazzle your mouse

Fed up with your sombre, grey mouse? Well now you can give it a truly psychedelic environment, thanks to Interface, who have come up with the garish Splat! Mat, a mouse mat so bright, that even Jeff Minter would be reaching for his shades.

Not only is the mat a riot of colour, it also boasts a microscopic carpet-like pile which supposedly improves productivity by increasing traction between the mouse ball and the mat. We all thought it felt like dragging your mouse through treacle, but we're all a bunch of conservative old fogies, so there you go. For more info phone Bill Fone on 0257 425839.

Inter-planetary postal systems

If you thought that play by mail games were boring pencil and paper affairs played by sad little people with anoraks and stacks of old railway timetables under their beds, you'd be right. But all that could be about to change, with a little help from PAW-PBM, who've come up with *VGA Planets*, a mind-blowingly amazing game of space conquest, exploration, war, politics and sex. Each player has a graphical front end to the game which runs on any VGA PC and which updates their game position from the turn disks that are sent back by PAW-PBM. Likewise, the player gives his fleet orders, as he would in any normal space strategy game, and these are saved in a special format on a disk that is sent back to PAW-PBM for processing. No more pencils and paper; anoraks and railway timetables optional – great fun! Our man's already been on the case, so look out for a full review next month. Actually there's not that much sex in it. In fact, I don't think there's any at all. Even so, it's still worth contacting PAW-PBM on (0392) 498022 for further details.

Renegade gets starring role

Renegade has signed a revolutionary deal with Triton Interactive Games, a subsidiary of Triton Interactive Television. All of Renegade's games will now become available to Triton for conversion to phone-in television games. The games will be adapted for play on television programmes. Competitors will phone in and use their telephone handsets to control the games. Triton has perfected a system that continuously monitors the tones generated by touch-tone phones, which enables the keypads on these phones to be used like a console style joypad.

DISPATCHES

+++ FOX COMPUTERS LTD HAVE got themselves a prize cache, in the form of C&D Programming Corporation's *CacheAll*, a disk cacheing utility that, the company claims, will successfully cache any storage device, including CD ROMs. *CacheAll* is available for £69.00 a copy so, if you've got those slow CD blues, get a little speed into your life by ringing Fox Computers Ltd on 081-882 1874 for more info.

+++ STEVE JACKSON'S HUGELY popular telephone adventure game, *FIST*, is currently being developed as a CD adventure game for Multimedia PCs. Unlike most adventure games, the emphasis will be on the audio aspects rather than the visuals. Contact Supervision on 071-702 9391 for further details.

+++ FOR THOSE OF YOU LOOKING for a little more adult entertainment, Supervision are also planning a CD version of *Lover's Guide*. This version goes beyond the books and videos by adding interactive sections, some of which can be specially configured for children (the mind boggles). Contact Supervision for the low down.

+++ FANS OF THE FLIGHTSTICK, who love its quality, but bemoan its lack of features are in for a treat. CH Products has recently announced the Flightstick Pro. This stick has all the features and the quality construction of the original Flightstick, but also sports two additional fire-buttons, and a coolie-hat for selecting views. There is no UK price, as yet, but you can phone the American manufacturer, CH Products for details on: 010 1 619 598 2518.

+++ ACCOLADE IS RE-RELEASING Tsunami's *Protostar*, *Ringworld* and *Blue Force* in a CD ROM format. All of the CDs contain additional audio. The *Ringworld* CD, for example contains an interview with Larry Niven. For further info call Accolade on 081-877 0880.

+++ MICROPROSE, WHICH HAS been publishing Spectrum Holobyte's products, including the hugely successful *Falcon 3.0*, since the closure of Mirrorsoft, has been bouyed up financially by a massive cash injection from Spectrum Holobyte. The $10 million plan will give Spectrum Holobyte a controlling stake in the company, but John Stealey, the company's president has resigned and will be replaced in the near future.

Bulletin

Starlord

Based on a classic play by mail game created and run by the near legendary Mike 'Midwinter' Singleton, *Starlord* mixes strategy and dogfighting elements in a futuristic game of universe domination. Using diplomacy, treachery and out and out violence you must fight your way to the top of the pile from humble common or garden Lord to Emperor of the Galaxy. That'll impress the neighbours.

Publisher: MicroProse **Out:** September **Price:** tba

Science fiction double feature

Accolade is continuing to build its reputation for quality science fiction adventures as it announces the release of *Gateway II: Homeworld* and *Companions of Xanth*. *Gateway II* is the sequel to *Legend*'s earlier graphic and text adventure based on Frederick Pohl's Heechee saga. In *Homeworld*, the player finally gets to cross the event horizon of the black hole and enter the strange homeworld of the mysterious Heechee race. In addition to the popular Legend text and graphics adventure system, *Homeworld* boasts some spectacular 256-colour animated sequences. *Gateway II* is out now for £34.99.

With *Companions of Xanth*, *Legend* has moved away from text adventures and implemented a new graphic point-and-click system. Based on Piers Anthony's *Xanth* novels, *Companions of Xanth* has the player exploring a world of elves, ogres, centaurs and many other mythical creatures. The game will be packaged with a paperback copy of *Demons Don't Dream*, the latest *Xanth* novel. Expect to see *Companions of Xanth* on the shelves some time in August. The price has yet to be decided.

Accolade continue to prove that there's still life, and beautiful graphics in the world of the text based adventure.

(Right) Gandalf controversially celebrates Interplay's new CD ROM releases by marrying himself. (Below) Star Trek: 25th Anniversary

To boldly go where no CD has gone before

INTERPLAY'S POPULAR *Star Trek: 25th Anniversary* game is to be released in an enhanced CD ROM format. The CD version has all the action packed gameplay of the original, but features the actual voices of William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy and Deforest Kelly. The original musical score and sound effects from the TV series are delivered in CD quality sound. *Star Trek: 25th Anniversary Enhanced CD-ROM* will be available in September for £49.99.

Also given the CD treatment is *The Lord of the Rings*. The CD version incorporates 20 minutes of footage from Ralph Bashki's animated film. The disc also contains over 40 minutes of CD audio sound including sound effects and speech from the film. An eight minute tutorial, featuring digitised actors, teaches the player how to use the enhanced interface. *The Lord of the Rings* is available now for £49.99.

The original *Star Trek: 25th Anniversary* game is soon to have a sequel in the form of *Star Trek: Judgement Rites*. This game not only gives the player eight new episodes, it also includes digitised matte paintings for the backgrounds and an all new music score with digitised sound effects from the original series. The game will be available in November for £39.99.

Burning Rubber

Remember those *Cannonball Run* movies in which Burt Reynolds challenges an unlikely collection of fading TV and film stars to an illegal race across America? Well now you can relive it all in Ocean's *Burning Rubber*, a racing game in which the objective is to win an underground illegal race across Europe and America. There are six checkpoints to reach in each continent, but you may choose your own route between them. Unlike most race games, ordinary European and US production cars are used in the race, including the Peugeot 205 GTI and the Ford Mustang.

Publisher: Ocean **Out:** September **Price:** tba

VERSION WATCH

A PC Zone first

Not content with simply being the best PC games magazine in the world, we're also set to become the most innovative. This month we introduce a brand new readers service as part of our buyers guide. VersionWatch is a regularly updated list of the latest versions and updates of all the popular games from the major companies. Simply look up the games you own and VersionWatch will tell you instantly whether you have the most up to date version of the game. If not, a quick call to the publisher should secure you a copy of the updated files. Don't say we never do anything for you.

NHL® Hockey

Electronic Arts' hugely successful hockey game for the Sega Megadrive and Super Nintendo is being converted to the PC with an additional strategy element. *NHL® Hockey*, which has been created in association with the National Hockey League™ and The National Hockey Players Association™, contains completely up to date and accurate team names, logos, players and season schedules. It can be played in a coaching only strategy mode or one or two player action modes.

Publisher: Electronic Arts **Out:** September **Price:** £44.99

DISPATCHES

+++ MICROPROSE IS ALSO IN trouble in the UK, according to recent press reports. Virgin Games is sueing the American giant, along with development team Vektor Grafix and its erstwhile boss Andy Craven over failure to pay Virgin royalties for games developed with the Vektor Grafix 3D system in which Virgin Games claims to have a stake.

+++ DOMARK HAS WON THE race to secure the official license to produce a game based on the FIA Formula One World Championship. Called, appropriately enough, *F1*, the game will feature all the major circuits, drivers and teams, a split-screen two player mode, and true-to-life details like road camber, accurate pit-stops, digitised doppler engine sounds and even independent monitoring of all four wheels. Budding Damon Hills can qualify in late September for just £29.99.

+++ RENEGADE HAS ATTRACTED yet another up and coming talent to its stable, namely Antipodean developer Binary Illusions. The team's first product, a graphic adventure called *Flight of the Amazon*, is to be released late in 1993 or early in 1994.

+++ INTERPLAY HAS SNAPPED up the rites to FTL's forthcoming *Dungeon Master II: The Legend of Skullkeep*. Interplay and FTL are both keeping quiet about the game at the moment, but we can tell you that it is set in a real time world, with independent and intelligent characters working against you. The universe will work on a strange blend of magic and technology. With stunning 256 colour graphics, *Dungeon Master II* should be the most anticipated role-playing game of 1993.

+++ VIRGIN ARE BRINGING A taste of arcade violence to the PC with *Mortal Kombat* which is being programmed for the PC by Probe who have already produced versions for the Sega market.
Virgin also has a couple more CD ROM titles lined up for Autumn release, *Conspiracy*, a game of corruption and conspiracy in modern KGB, plus the CD ROM version of *Shuttle*.

+++ FINALLY WE CAN'T CLOSE this issue without some mention of dinosaurs, namely *Jurassic Art*, a Windows graphics package from Computer Support Corporation, with a typeface called 'Dinosauria'!

LEGENDARY SOFTWARE

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COVER DISKS

Disk 1

Simon the

Simon the Sorcerer is a British adventure set to take the world by storm. We're so sure you'll love it, we've arranged an exclusive playable demo with PDQ and Adventure Soft, so you can see for yourself just how good it is. Even if graphic adventures aren't your thing, you'll find the second disk jam-packed with the very best shareware games we could lay our grubby mitts on. Enjoy.

A NOT SO ORDINARY tale of a smart teenage kid and his faithful hound, accidentally thrown into a strange parallel world in which magic is a way of life. The kid in question, one Simon, becomes an apprentice wizard and, before he can leave this weird world he finds himself in, he must solve many excruciating problems, ultimately saving another wizard from certain demagitisation (yuk!).

Installing the game

Simon the Sorcerer must be installed to a hard drive before you can run it. To install to a hard drive, place the cover disk into a spare drive and log onto that drive. For example, if you have placed the cover disk in drive A, then type:

A: [ENTER]

To start the installation program, type:

DISKZONE [ENTER]

Now follow the on-screen instructions.

RUNNING SETUP

When you have installed *Simon the Sorcerer* on your hard drive, type:

SETUP [ENTER]

Select the appropriate sound card and then follow the on-screen instructions.

Playing the game

Your goal in the complete version of *Simon the Sorcerer* is to rescue Calypso the wizard, who is the only one who has the power to return you to your own world. You take on the role of Simon, a young boy who is suddenly thrust into a universe of fantasy and magic. In this somewhat truncated version you will be able to explore the Dwarves' mine and meet the swampling.

Moving about

To move Simon around the screen you need simply to highlight the 'Walk To' icon by clicking on it, then clicking on the area that you wish to move him to. Simon will then walk to that point or the nearest point he can reach.

'Walk To' is one of the default icons and for most of the game you will not need to pre-select it, you will be able to move by simply clicking on the area that you want Simon to walk to.

'Walk To' is the default icon when the pointer is over the screen window and 'Look At' is the default icon when the pointer is over the inventory.

Doing stuff

In *Simon the Sorcerer* clicking on the approptiate verbs enables Simon to perform a variety of actions with/on a variety of objects.

You will notice that by moving the pointer over certain parts of the screen, the ID information bar will tell you what is under the pointer.

To do something to an object, first select the verb you wish to use. It will appear on the ID bar. Second, select the object you wish to use it on. It will then replace the verb in the ID bar. Third, click the left mouse button to perform the selected action. Something will either happen on screen or Simon will tell you the result.

Some verbs require the input of two objects. For example, if you select 'Use', then two objects will usually need to be selected to make something happen. After the first object is selected, a further prompt (in this case 'With What?') will appear in the ID Bar. Another object must subsequently be selected to complete the verb's action.

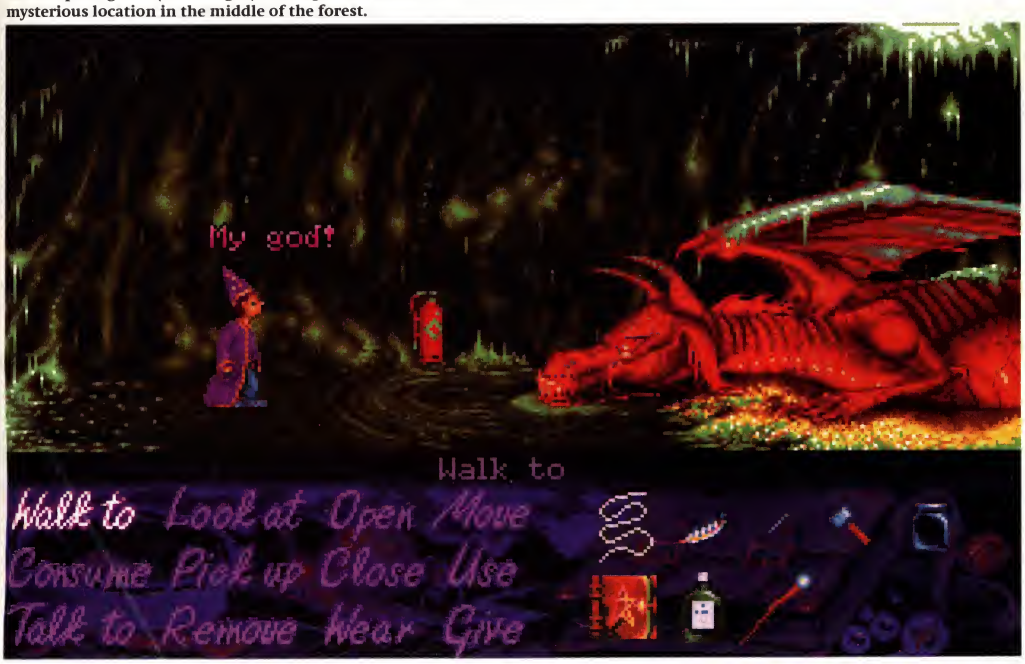
Clicking twice on an area of the screen which contains no objects in it, or completing an action will return you to the default verb.

The verbs available are:

Walk To – Tell Simon to walk to an area of the screen.

Talk To – Make Simon attempt to strike up a conversation with another character.

(Below) One of the many strange encounters you will have in the complete game. (Below right) You begin this demo in a mysterious location in the middle of the forest.



Sorcerer

IMPORTANT

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The Shareware programs on this disk are supplied as an evaluation service to our readers. If you enjoy these games, you should acknowledge the authors' efforts by registering as an official user and sending the recommended fee. In most cases this will entitle you to updated versions of the game, extra levels or help files and documentation. It will also fund the development of further games.

Give – Instruct Simon to give an object to another character in the game. You must first select an object to give, then the character to give it to.

Move – Ask Simon to push or pull a particular object.

Look At – Request that Simon examine an object more closely

Use - Order Simon to use two objects together.

Wear – Insist that Simon wear an item of clothing.

Remove – Command Simon to remove a particular item of clothing.

Consume – Ask Simon to eat or drink something

Pick Up – Request that Simon takes an object and stows it away in his pack.

Open – Call for Simon to open something, like a door, chest, etc.

Close – Invite Simon to close something, like a chest, door and so on.

Talking to people/things

Sometimes Simon will have to initiate a conversation by himself and sometimes people will start talking to him. What the person says will appear on the screen beside them, colour coded to match their character. Simon will usually be given a list of possible choices that will overlay the verb bank and inventory.

The conversation proceeds until Simon or the other character decides otherwise and selects a quit option such as 'I really don't want to speak to you anymore!'

This will usually end the conversation. If Simon wishes to re-enter he must select Talk To again.

Some of the scenes from the full game. In this playable demo you get to visit the Swampling and the Dwarf Mine (no, not a place where you mine dwarves, just somewhere that dwarves mine... oh you know what I mean).

** HELP !**

If your cover disk won't load and flames are pouring out of the hard drive then 'phone Sam Miah on:

COVER DISK HELPLINE

0274 736990

The Helpline operates between 9.00am and 4.30pm weekdays. If possible, please have your computer operating and your cover disk ready when you 'phone the Helpline. If your 'phone is not near the computer then please note down as much information about the fault as you can and have a pen and paper handy before you call.

If, having called the Helpline, you are advised that the disk needs returning, please place it in a padded envelope with a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the replacement disk, and send it to **PC Zone Issue 5, Disk Replacements, TIB PLC, TIB House, 11 Edward Street, Bradford, BD4 7BH.** Please *do not* return faulty disks to *PC Zone*. We do not stock replacement disks, and will be unable to respond. (Besides we'll probably lose your letter in the mess on Paul's desk.)

Disk 2
Shareware sensation

ON THE SECOND DISK you will find a selection of top Shareware games and games related utilities. These must be installed to a floppy or hard disk before they can be used. To install the games, place the cover disk into a spare drive and log onto that drive. For example, if you have placed the cover disk in drive A, then type:

`A:` [ENTER]

To start the installation program, type:

`DISKZONE` [ENTER]

Now follow the on-screen instructions.

For further instructions on using these programs, you should refer to the document files that come with them. These usually have the extension .DOC or .TXT. To read them type:

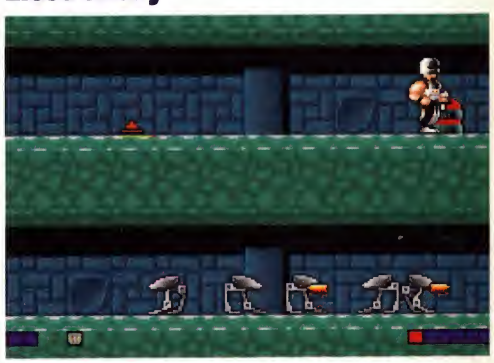
`TYPE FILE.DOC | MORE` [ENTER]

replacing the example filename above with the correct one. To print a document, turn on your printer and then type:

`COPY FILE.DOC PRN` [ENTER]

replacing the example filename above with the correct one.

ElectroBody



This game will shock you! Quite literally too – you won't get through the shareware version of this great new German shareware game without being zapped, sizzled and fried at least a dozen times. There you were, flying over the planet Xepton, minding your own business – the next thing you know, you're trapped on a planet full of mindless and malign robots with a dead buddy and nowhere to hide. As if life wasn't hard enough, you're a cyborg to boot.

Your only hope of preventing your day being a complete sod is to fight your way out of the massive alien complex, laying waste lasers, killer pipes and robots. Have fun, and if you've got a soundcard, listen out for the excellent samples, including the now legendary 'Jesus is here!'

These shareware programs have been included as an evaluation service for our readers. If you enjoy, and continue to use them, you should support the author by sending the appropriate registration fee to the address given. Not only will this provide the author with the funds he or she needs to continue producing quality shareware, it often entitles you to an upgrade, additional documentation and/or technical support.

Blueprint

IndyCar Racing

PUBLISHER: Papyrus/Virgin	PRICE: tba
TELEPHONE: 081 960 2255	OUT: Late November

Don't believe what anyone tells you. There are just two PC driving games worth their salt: *Indy 500* – the 1989 veteran from Papyrus with comparatively primitive graphics but great gameplay – and MicroProse's stunning *Formula One Grand Prix* of 1992. Tim Ponting takes a peek at Papyrus' new baby, *IndyCar Racing*, and reckons it's like jumping into your TV and taking over from Nigel – except you don't always come first.

PHOTOS: REX FEATURES

CARS THAT RACE the IndyCar series are very different from Formula One vehicles; minor things like the engines, tyres, car shapes and chassis but, most importantly, IndyCars are bristling with more cameras than the assembled paparazzi outside Balmoral. There's the one that peers over the driver's right shoulder, like in Formula One; but there's also one that looks out of the gearbox, another one under the front nose fin, one designed to examine the way the suspension bobs up and down in an entertaining fashion... in fact, anywhere you can sell sponsorship, put a camera. ('We'd like to etch "Briter Whiter" on top of the fourth cylinder.' 'Certainly sir, I'm sure we can squeeze a camera in there, that'll be two hundred thousand dollars please.')

TV is what drives IndyCar racing, not a council of lawyers and beaurocrats like FISA. Which, not surprisingly, makes it a hundred times more exciting to watch than Formula One. Papyrus Publishing Inc. has realised this strength in its follow up to the ancient and fabulous *Indy 500* and tried to make the new game as much like interacting with the TV coverage of IndyCar racing as possible.

'Since our customer has seen televised coverage, we have based our simulation's "look" on the actual colours, camera angles and even the fonts used on TV,' explains Dave Kaemmer, programmer, designer, IndyCar nut and, when he's not busy with the first three, Vice-President of Papyrus .

MESSING ABOUT IN CARS

Tweaking the vehicle set-up is enough to set the techies' hearts pounding. The screens speak for themselves, provided you know what 'camber' is.

Messing about with cameras

There are loads of camera replay angles to choose from. Here is a selection. The controls are VCR-like and you can select any car to be the centre of attention.

1. This TV replay shot shows off the detail of the cars, right down to the tiny stickers on the nose cone.
2. Queued up behind Johansson. Marvel at the accurate road camber…
3. This in-car view will have the driver's head in the foreground. Coming out of the corkscrew at Laguna. Lovely rolling mountains in the background.
4. Some geezer trying to impale Mario from behind. Painful. Watching a whole lap in this camera view makes you feel sick, it's so fast.
5. A zoomed out TV view at the beginning of Laguna's start-finish straight. Note the large, texture mapped billboard in the background.
6. A blimp's-eye view at Laguna.

A hard act...

Following a game as successful as *Indy 500* is not easy. It had four key strengths: it was the first driving game with a realistic physics model, the frame rate of its polygon graphics was high, the action replay facility was fantastic, and the cars were fully adjustable, giving endless hours of tweaking for the committed enthusiast. Its main drawback was that driving action was limited to one oval course.

IndyCar Racing offers all the strengths of the original, but in an updated game environment that includes multiple tracks, souped-up graphics and a long and approving look at the best elements of MicroProse's *Formula One Grand Prix*. But the structure of the game is much the same as before; there's not a great deal you can do imaginatively with the structure of a racing simulation, after all. 'I'm not really much of a game designer.' says Kaemmer, 'With a driving game, it's pretty much there already.' You'll be able to practice courses, play a single driver racing an entire season, carry out pre-season testing etc. It'll be fairly similar to *Formula One Grand Prix*.

Where it differs completely from *Indy 500*, is in the variety of the courses on which to race. Papyrus has secured the official licence to use all 16 IndyCar tracks, which include superspeedways, short ovals, road courses and city circuits. The initial release will include up to eight tracks (one or two of which will be forwarded to buyers when they register the game – a great idea), to be followed by one or more additional track disks to give the full set.

'We have researched the tracks very carefully, visiting some courses with cameras, studying course data for others. At some of the courses – like Laguna Seca – they still have the original survey blueprints which have all the precise measurements like corner radii mapped out.' us Geological Survey maps were also consulted to ensure the topography was accurate, and video and stills cameras used for adding veracity to the track-side objects. 'In-car footage also made very interesting viewing for us. It allowed us to check the road cambers in particular were correct.'

Not only is the track modelled accurately, but even the positioning of TV cameras around the course is absolutely spot on, adding even more to the reality of the game. When you watch a lap on TV replay mode, if you half close your eyes it's like watching a broadcast. Except that it's you driving. In the final game, Papyrus is planning to make the TV replay mode action-sensitive: the cameras used will vary from lap to lap, it'll zoom in on crashes and zoom out to view passing manoeuvres. You'll also be able to save these replays 'on the hoof' for later viewing. The 'blimp' view – essential for viewing crashes – is still there too. The replays are much more attractive to watch than the original *Indy*, thanks to the fabulous texture-mapped cars.

'Texture mapping gives a great sense of speed.' explains Kaemmer, 'Simple polygon modelling is okay, but it's not as gripping to watch.' To see the difference it makes, you only have to view an action replay from the 'gearbox' view out ☞

'Anyone who enjoyed the original Indy is going to be drawn to this one like Nigel Mansell to a big cheque.'

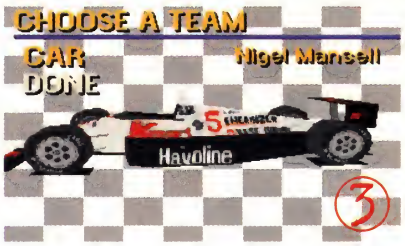
These are the Papyrus chaps who are programming IndyCar Racing. Dave Kaemmer is the genius-type geezer sitting down in the middle.

DRIVING THE WRONG WAY ROUND THE TRACK

Of course, it first happens by a mistake when you get disorientated. The car ends up spinning to a standstill, and you can't remember which way you're pointing. And then you hit on the idea of driving the wrong way round the track and either a) seeing how many cars you can take out in one wreck, or b) how many laps you can survive. Will this be as much fun in *IndyCar Racing* as it was in *Indy 500*? 'We've improved the damage simulation with a more accurate collision model. It's sensitive to the part of the car that hits.' But will you be able to see bits scattering everywhere? 'We will be adding wondrous special effects, especially for crashes; these will include smoke, flame effects and realistic debris,' claims Dan Scherlis tantalisingly. Yes, yes, but can you roll cars this time, and create pile-ups of gargantuan proportions? 'You'll just have to wait and see.'

START-UP

❶ **OPTIONS SCREEN:** Work in progress on the main menu screen. The greyed-out options weren't active in the preview build we saw.
❷ **TRACK SELECT SCREEN:** When selecting the track, an aerial photo pops up in the background.
❸ **SELECTING YOUR TEAM:** As you flick through the teams, admire the individually artworked decals on each car. Here's Nigel's 'K-Mart' motor. It's like being sponsored by Mr Byrite...



OUT Indy 5000 — IndyCar Racer IN

Plain vector graphics

You can see how basic the 'cutting edge' vector graphics now look. But they were fast, and that's essential for a driving game. And these polygons were a vast improvement over previous 3D driving game attempts.

3-D SuperTexture

The detail on the road, cars and track-side objects is stunning. The texture mapping technique wraps the bitmapped images round the polygons, allowing complex 3D patterns like decals and billboards. It even makes *Formula One Grand Prix* look tawdry...

Plain car set-up screens

The car was completely configurable in *Indy 500*, and players have spent hours getting lap speeds up to 240mph in the groove. But the graphics were rudimentary to say the least.

Snazzy flying-eye set-up screens

It looks pretty good from static screens, but when you select a new tyre to adjust, the view 'flies' to a different perspective on the new tyre. By the way, all these 'in-between' screens use the in-game graphic engine. If you get this close to the cars on a replay, they look this good.

20 second action replay

In the original *Indy 500*, the action replay facility was excellent for its time, but limited to 20 seconds, which took around 64K of memory. Although there are more variables to store in *IndyCar Racing*, the replay period will be limited only by memory.

TV-realistic action replays

The action replay facility has the usual easy to use VCR-type controls, with a number of pre-set camera angles (see 'Messing about with cameras'). Thanks to the improved graphics overall, the replays are even more special than in the original.

Pretty accurate driving model

One of the strengths of the original. It felt responsive, it skidded properly, it required rhythm and concentration. There were limitations, mainly in the modelling of the effects of camber and lack of tow effects, vital in oval racing. And you couldn't alter it to make it easier.

Horrifyingly accurate driving model

But with a whole range of break-it-in-gently options. This is where *Formula One Grand Prix* did so well. *IndyCar Racing* will have auto-braking, gear change, steering assistance and other, now familiar, options for beginners. But for realism freaks, the physics model has been vastly improved.

'Ere, 'Arry, there's some geezer waving a blackboard at me. This ain't bleedin' school you know.

THE BOARD

This is the blackboard they wave at you as you drive past at 220mph. And you're supposed to read and remember all of it. Pah!

1. Driver's name. This is Nigel's board, funnily enough.
2. Your position. Nigel is 17th (out of 18...).
3. The number of the lap you're on. 11 in this case.
4. Your last lap time. A stonking 0:34.472 at Michigan.
5. The number of the car immediately in front of you. Number 6, Mario Andretti, as it happens.
6. The time behind the car in front. 16.3 seconds to close up...

☞ of the back of the car. The sense of speed is awesome, thanks to the striations on the track. Texture mapping also allows details such as sponsorship decals, billboards and other objects to be brought into the picture. Even drivers' helmets will hopefully end up with drivers' individual colours.

I like driving in my car

Unlike the closely guarded 'home-made' cars raced in Formula One, you can buy an IndyCar off the shelf. A very large, expensive shelf, usually in Britain, as it happens. March and Lola, Penske and possibly even Galmer chassis will be represented, with engines from Cosworth, Chevvy, Buick et al. 'Each chassis will have around four or five major variables which will alter the way it handles,' explains Kaemmer, 'things like the centre of pressure, where the downforce acts on the car.'

The physical principles of racing car design obviously fascinate him, and the realism of the driving model is probably the most important aspect of the game. This time, drafting (getting a tow from the hole punched in the air by the car in front) and turbulence (like flatulence but from the messy air left in the wake of a car) are both included, as are camber and altitude change effects. For example, grip will be better in a bend at the bottom of a hill than at the top where the change of altitude reduces adhesion. 'I've read books on racing car dynamics from front to back and then back to front again,' admits Kaemmer, 'and actually, there's a really good UK magazine I get called *Race Car Engineering*. But at the end of the day, it's the feel that counts. When you have an accurate physics model, you actually come across the same handling problems as race car engineers.' There will also be improved weather effects, including that of hot weather on tyre behaviour and rain and wind on general handling.

In the quest for the best control system Papyrus intends to pack *IndyCar Racing* with dedicated support for many different hardware set-ups. Apart from keyboard and mouse, the game will support a number of joystick configurations – a second joystick for the throttle, yokes, pedals and so on. There is also a rumour that Papyrus is teaming up with a well-known controller manufacturer to produce a custom steering wheel/pedal set.

There is also to be two player support in the form of both serial and modem head to head options. The exact form this will take is unclear, but Kaemmer is quietly confident that it will work well. There are even plans afoot for a multi-player capability in a later version... Anyone fancy a spot of networked car racing?

Sound support should also be comprehensive with the present early samples sounding hot already. Car engine notes are calculated precisely according to a mathematical model of doppler shift, which should be useful to let you know when Mario Andretti's halfway up your tailpipe if you didn't spot him in your mirrors.

Speaking of the other drivers, Kaemmer has just begun work on the Artificial Intelligence routines for the other cars. Rather than have them glued to a single racing line (which is how *Formula One Grand Prix* feels), he'll be compiling a number of alternate driving lines. Cars will be able to hop between them as circumstances dictate. And – joy of joys – back markers will sometimes move over for you. Should you lose track of the driving line yourself, the texture mapping on the road surface will include rubber skid marks which are thicker on the racing line. Very clever stuff indeed.

So who'll like this game, then?

Anyone who enjoyed the original *Indy* is going to be drawn to this one like Nigel Mansell to a big cheque. Apparently *Indy 500* had a comparatively large following in Europe,despite the subject matter. Americans didn't seem to be as receptive to the complexity and depth of the game. *IndyCar Racing* builds on the depth but hopefully adds some decent driving aids for the beginner. If the easy learning options work well (they weren't implemented in the preview build), the crashes are spectacular and frame rate fast enough, this could just be the new benchmark racing game. PZ

Nigel's in second place, just about to take the lead at Michigan International Speedway, when a tyre blows. The pit lane wall beckons. Note the race order list that can be toggled on and off, and the various cockpit controls. You'll be able to alter turbo boost, brake bias and anti-rollbar settings live during the race.

THE RUB

Okay, so it's a fully 32-bit program which uses a DOS extender to give it access to more memory. You'll have to have a 386 or above and, for full texture mapping, a 486 will be essential. It will just about run in 2Mb RAM, though more memory will be used if it's fitted for full texture mapping and storing replays. The installation routine will auto-sense the speed of your PC and adjust the options accordingly.

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Blueprint

Jurassic Park

PUBLISHER: Ocean | PRICE: tba

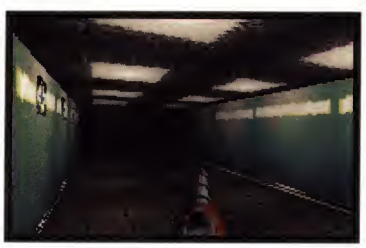
TELEPHONE: 061 832 6633 | OUT: 1 October 1993

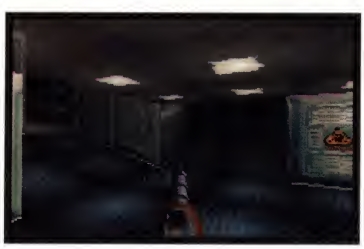
MONSTER MASH

There are approximately ten types of dinosaur in the game not all of whom are dangerous; dinosaurs invented vegetarianism long before lentils had even begun to evolve. There are, of course, a couple of Tyrannosaurus Rex in the game, and yes, there is a suitably gory scene if it decides to chew things over with you. It's what gameplay is all about.

More dangerous than dinosaur teeth are dinosaur tactics. Although intelligent is not a word usually associated with dinosaurs, much is made in the book of the fact that some of them are pack animals. This is particularly true of the Raptors. (Yes, yes them again... sorry to keep harping on about them but honestly they're dead nasty.) Raptors hunt in packs, they play as a team in a manner England's football team can only dream about. This is carried through into the game. Don't expect them all to run straight at you like so much cannon fodder. Watch your flanks and watch your back.

Chrichton did the book, Spielberg did the movie, Paul Lakin visits Ocean Software (who are doing the game) to see if they're looking for anyone to do the tea towel.





INTERIOR VIEWS

The interior views in the game *Jurassic Park* are what everyone is raving about. There are a number of outhouses and store rooms and if these are entered you are plunged into a 3D first person perspective world and a series of programmers crying: 'It's faster/smoother than *Ultima Underworld*'.

Four external shots demonstrating the top down 3D landscape, the outhouses (inside which the first person perspective takes place) and the inadequacies of a safety cage in dealing with a Tyranasaurus Rex.

MENTION FILM LICENCE to any tired old computer games hack and their eyes will glaze over with cynicism. 'Licence to print money' they'll sneer. 'Never mind the gameplay; feel the endorsement'. There is some justice in the charge that games based on big film licenses have tended to be... ah... disappointing, but there are a number of honourable exceptions. *Jurassic Park* looks set fair to be one of these.

'We wanted to produce something different,' is the Ocean line. A game not only with the film's characters but the film's feel. Consequently a lot of work has gone into the sound and vision. 'Music and look are very important for atmosphere, which is key to the game'. To take a tiny example, the display panels inside the park buildings are LED so they'll show up even in the dark. Unless of course someone... or something... passes in front of them. At which point the faint-hearted pass out.

Going to the movies

However we're getting ahead of ourselves. Before the game comes the licence which, in the case of something like *Jurassic Park,* is not something you pick up a couple of days before the film is released. Ocean actually signed up for this one in July/August 1992, though development was delayed while they waited for the best programmers to be available for the project.

Once development was underway, the involvement with the film company was quite close. The programmers were working from the original script provided when the film went into production (a slightly worrying occupation given that films tend to change considerably during production). The mighty Spielberg himself had to approve the concept and graphics. The film company also provided both conceptual artwork of the dinosaurs and original sound effects from the film.

With all that information all Ocean had to do was come up with a game design. Easy? Well not really. A large number of film licences, particularly action films, break down quite easily into a shoot 'em-up/beat 'em-up formula. Not so *Jurassic Park* which involves a lot more running away than standing and fighting.

Larks in the park

All the action in *Jurassic Park* takes place in the second half where, for a combination of reasons, the dinosaurs are roaming wild. In order to regain control of the park the scientists need to first restart the power and then restart the main computer. Dead easy – if there weren't a number of Raptors hopping about the compound. Despite their size the Raptors are the real villains of the piece. Fast and deadly, they're the Mohammed Ali's of the prehistoric world, except they can use their teeth.

The game beaks down into two distinct sections. Exterior sections, of which there are nine levels, are top down with 3D landscape. This gives a slightly unusual and effective look to the whole thing while showing the influence of the SNES version. However the element of the game the programmers seem most proud of, the bit which everyone who walked into the room kept asking if I'd seen, is the interior section.

As well as cropping up during the rest of the game the interiors also make up the whole of the last three levels as you struggle to get the system up and running and avoid being eaten. It's difficult to say, really, at this early stage, but it's certainly looking very good.

In the future there will be...

Jurassic Park is of course appearing on every computer and console system known to man and a few known only to Radnorak Gwamthulum of the planet Oragno. Of most interest to *PC Zone* readers is the CD ROM version which will probably differ from the floppy version by having a more educational element to it, a sort of 'Identifying Dinosaurs' element which will teach you everything you need to know about the ancient kings of the planet. Mind you if Michael Chrichton has the gift of prophecy this might count not so much as education as essential survival information.

BOOK AT BEDTIME

Alright, so at the time of writing I haven't seen the film yet, however, in a fit of journalistic integrity unmatched since the days of Watergate I have read the book. (Whatever next? I'll be playing games before I review them soon!) You probably know the basic scenario by now: scientists have finally managed to grow a living creature from DNA. Since DNA cannot survive in fossilised bone, dinosaur samples have been retrieved from prehistoric blood-sucking insects trapped in amber. Although appallingly written it does have some interesting ideas concerning the way leisure is dominating our lives. Investment and research is being channelled into entertainment because that's where the big profits are.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of genetic engineering, it is alarming to think that a stunning advance should be exploited solely as a plaything. Alarming but believable. However, ideas apart, the book is essentially a series of reasonably exciting chase sequences. Not a stunning read but great material for a film or game.

PC ZONE

rev

You wouldn't play a game without reading the instructions (Let's pretend heh?) so don't read a review without reading these pages. Our guide to how the reviewing system works. Or doesn't as the case may be.

PC ZONE CLASSIC

THE SCORE

All games receive an overall mark out of 100. So by definition that's a percentage but if you want to call it 'Out of a hundred' then you go ahead and call it 'Out of a hundred'. You can even call it 'Ernest' if you like.

As a rough guide to interpreting the scores here's the guidelines we give to reviewers. (Not that they ever read them mind you. It can be quite heartbreaking at times…)

90+ (*PC Zone* Classic) Highly original idea or an exceptional, near 'definitive' version of an old idea. Flawless in all departments and crammed to overflowing with long-term playability. Alternatively the software company took the reviewer to Paris for the weekend.

80–89 (*PC Zone* Recommended) Extremely well executed strong in all/all but one department. High degree of originality.

70–79 Strong idea, well executed. Not necessarily very original. However weaknesses do not seriously impair playability. and it has a reasonably long life.

60–69 Games falling into the 'If you like this style of game you'll like this if not you won't' category. Plus games strong on idea but weak on presentation or vice versa.

50–59 Seen it all before, take it or leave it. Nothing special to recommend it but not abysmal either.

40–49 Dodgy. Still playable but probably only the once.

30–39 Seriously weak in idea and execution

20–29 The game is hopeless or the software company forgot the £50 cash bribe.

10–19 Bin jobs

0–9 It didn't work. It crashed the PC and got jammed in the disk drive.

ZONAL

The postcards from summer hols have been slowly accumulating over the past few weeks, so we thought we'd take this opportunity to share some of the highlights with you.

Paul Lakin

DEAR SUBJECTS, Having a lovely time back in my ancestral home in Bulgaria. Put down a peasant revolt yesterday. What fun! Today I am going off to annex Macedonia. Auntie Stanka is packing me a picnic before I go. See you soon. PS. You can take Scotford off the rack now if you like.

Laurence Scotford

LOVIES, DAHLINGS, Am enjoying my final day working with dear Dickie on his latest extravagnza. Tonight he's throwing a huge party for all the big names: De Niro, Streep, Redford, and dahling Arnie of course. Should be great. Anyway, got to dash – my shift behind the bar starts in half an hour.

Mark Burgess

DEAR ZONIES, Greetings from the gorgeous Galapagos islands. Sorry about the hurried writing – am very excited. On the verge of the most significant, and dare I say profitable, discovery in the entire history of the world: blue-green algae toothpaste! Impressed now, aren't you?

Duncan MacDonald

DEAR LUCKY PEOPLE, Am sitting outside Thomas Cook at the Elephant and Castle. Was about to book my three month luxury cruise when the travel agent starting tapping all my details into the scariest computer I've ever seen. Think I'll go to Butlins again this year.

iews

PC ZONE score

A game of truly monumental averageness with very little character.

50

Price: £35.99 **Out:** Now
Published: Dennis
Telephone: 071 631 1433

THE SPECS

Is there anything worse than buying a game only to find it's not compatible with your machine? Well yes, coming home and finding your cat on fire for instance, but we can't do anything about that. With this technical box we can at least make sure you know what memory, graphic and sound support you will need (or can use) with each game.

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 565K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 20MHz
Installation: Essential

IN PERSPECTIVE

Often all that a review is saying is that a game is as good as that one but not quite as good as the other one. 'In Perspective' attempts to illustrate this visually by rating the game in terms of similar examples. The 'scores' given in this graph are relative to each other i.e. all examples might score highly in their own right but not against each other. Well it seemed a good idea in the pub last night. Let us know what you think.

A Better Game

The Game Being Reviewed

A Worse Game

What's On Our Hard Disk?

Some games get installed, reviewed and then deleted. Others hang around a lot longer. This (In no particular order) is what's currently nestling on our hard drive. Not necessarily the best games around, but the ones we keep coming back to.

1. **4D Sports Boxing**
2. **Rules of Engagement**
3. **Tornado**
4. **Sensible Soccer**
5. **X-Wing**

David McCandless

YO FELLOW BEINGS, Having a cool time in the Obstovodsky institute for criminally insane reviewers. Am doing your card with my newest crayon. Sorry it's blunt – I've been using it to dig my way out. Haven't got very far, but my padded cell now has a purple patch in one corner.

Patrick McCarthy

DEAR FIENDS, Hope this card gets to you – bearers a bit unreliable. Am continuing to plunge on through the African bush in search of more wild and savage animals to add to my collection. Had to put Perkins down with the elephant gun yesterday – idiot offered a sugar lump to a rhino.

Andy Clerkson

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, Mother Theresa has given me leave to take time out from my work with the poor to write to you. Today I saved 13 people from poverty and the ways of the devil, though I have been asked to concentrate my efforts on the Indians rather than American tourists.

Andy Butcher

GREETINGS FROM XANTANIA, HUMANS, I Thagros, do charge thee to behold my mighty weapon – Shaakra, magic sword of the ancient line of Gtthronggh. Know then, that I have ventured forth against the Orcs and driven them from the sacred... *(Yes, yes, I think we get the picture. Ed)*

Tornado from Digital Integration is the most eagerly awaited flight sim of the year, so Duncan MacDonald's decided not to waste valuable time with an overly long and unfunny intro. _(Something of a first then. Ed)._

PC ZONE CLASSIC

(Main) A real life Tornado bearing it's private parts to the world. (Below left) Hang around long enough and a train might come along. (Below middle) That's one runway buggered up. (Below right) Runway attack number two, only the pilot (i.e., me) pressed the wrong key and armed the cannons by mistake.

Tornado Fact:

Stall without your SPILS on-board computer system turned on and you'll soon be learning about spin recovery.

Tornado

MANUAL ALERT. MAYDAY, MAYDAY.

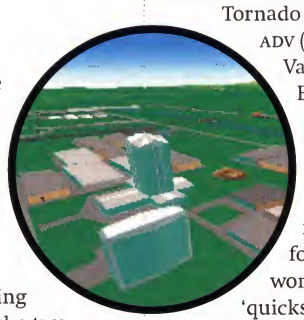
BEFORE GETTING into the thick of things, I just want to briefly mention that apart from the very attractive shiny scenario maps you get with the *Tornado* package (so glossy you could probably ice-skate on them), you also get a *massive* 330 page manual: and the point here is that you're going to *have* to read it. Every single page, every single word, every single letter. But here's the good news: it doesn't matter, because it's one of the best manuals around. Well laid out and brilliantly written, it's both informative, interesting and, at times, amusing. So don't panic when you first open the box.

Down to business

Okay, onto the game itself. There are loads of options screens and lots of switches to muck about with, so what I'll do is talk you through the opening moments of *Tornado* ownership; things you might conceivably do once you've installed it on your hard drive, dimmed the lights and made a cup of tea/coffee (or whatever).

Show off to a chum

Clicking on 'review' takes you to the screen where you can show off all the '3D shapes' in the game to whoever you've invited round. And jolly nice shapes they are too. Rotate them and pitch them up and down; aircraft, tanks, radar, SAM launchers and so on. But now for the 'twist'. Just as your chum thinks he's seen all there is to see, tap a button and 'shazam': up pops a digitised photo of whatever polygon vehicle is currently being displayed. 'Look,' you can say, switching between the two images, 'see how accurate the model is.' 'Yes, but it hasn't got any guru shading' your chum will reply. And so on.



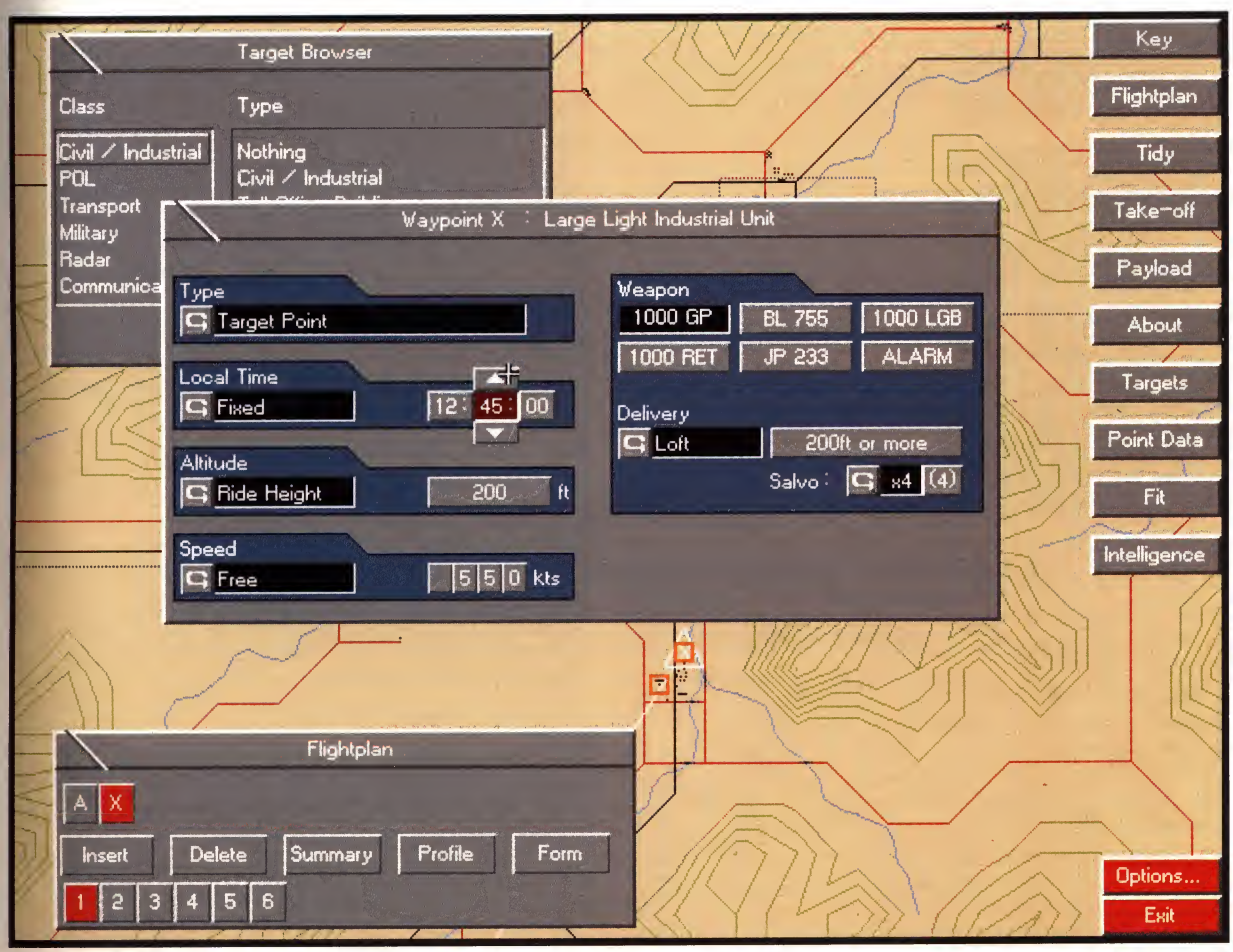
Logging on

Tornado has a fully functioning pilots log, with room for 20 different pilots' names. Once you've signed on (you're initially given the rank of Flight Officer), your flying hours and mission scores are automatically notched up. There is, by the way, a default pilot in the log already. Not only is he totally indestructible and undeletable, but he already has the highest rank possible – namely that of Group Captain. 'So what?' you say. You'll find out later.

Quickstart

For the terminally impatient there are two quickstart missions, one for the IDS (Interdictor Strike Variant) Tornado and one for the ADV (Air Defence Variant) Tornado. Both of these missions are further subdivided into 'hard' and 'easy'. However, if you're brand new to *Tornado* (and especially if you haven't bothered to read the manual) then substitute the word 'impossible' for the word 'hard', the word 'confusing' for the word 'easy' and the word 'quickdie' for the word 'quickstart'. It looks like Digital Integration felt that as *Falcon 3* had a quickstart, *Tornado* should have one as well. But it isn't that sort of game. It's nightmarishly complex.

(Below) Oooh! Hit by triple-A. Inside the cockpit you get a similar flash, and everything buffets around. (Inset) Terrain following at 200 feet? Great, but try not to forget that some buildings are a tad higher.



(Above) One of the 'shapes' with its digitised real-life counterpart. (Left) The all important Mission Planner, with its multitude of draggable windows, three of which are on display at the moment. The Target Browser allows you to highlight any type of ground structure you desire – with the greatest of ease. Once you've tracked down a suitable candidate you can designate it as a Target Waypoint, using the flightplan window. Then comes the jiggery pokery of setting such things as Time On Target, altitude for the leg, speed for the leg, weapon type, delivery mode and salvo size. The type of weapon you choose, by the way, will be automatically loaded onto the Tornado as a 'package'. There's room for three air to ground packages plus a fourth containing countermeasures (ECM, chaff, etc.).

(Top) 'And lo,' said the Lord, 'there was a triple-A site near the target, and its cannon shells didst spew merrily forth, towards the fast approaching Tornado.' (Above) Tornado at night, with lots of pretty flickering lights down on the runway. The sky's nice too. Tornado at night and in thick fog is another story altogether though, because you can't see a darned thing, and it's flying by instruments alone. (Top Right Circle) Exterior view of a Tornado getting hit by triple-A at night, turning the hitherto virtually invisible plane into a dramatic silhouette. Gosh!

'...When you finally go to bed, the Mission Planner will appear in at least one of your dreams.'

Simulator

Now you'll start getting somewhere, because the simulator, over a series of 20 lessons, takes you through all the basic tactics, manoeuvres and emergency procedures you'll be needing later on in both the ADV and the IDS Tornadoes; from weapons training to spin recovery to landing with your engines out. And you can tailor things, too: you can muck about with the time of day, the weather conditions, the weapons load, the fuel load, the aircraft weight and whether you'll bounce rather than explode on collisions. The most important toggle, however, and the one you'll have to be most wary of flicking 'on' to begin with, is the Enemy Activity on/off switch. Unlike (for instance) *Falcon 3*, the enemy forces in *Tornado* are simply active or inactive. You can't say: 'Oh, well, we'll have average AAA gunners, good pilots but crap SAM operatives.' Like I said, the enemy is either on or off, and if he's on – and if you stray too near him without knowing *exactly* what you're doing – then you're jiggered.

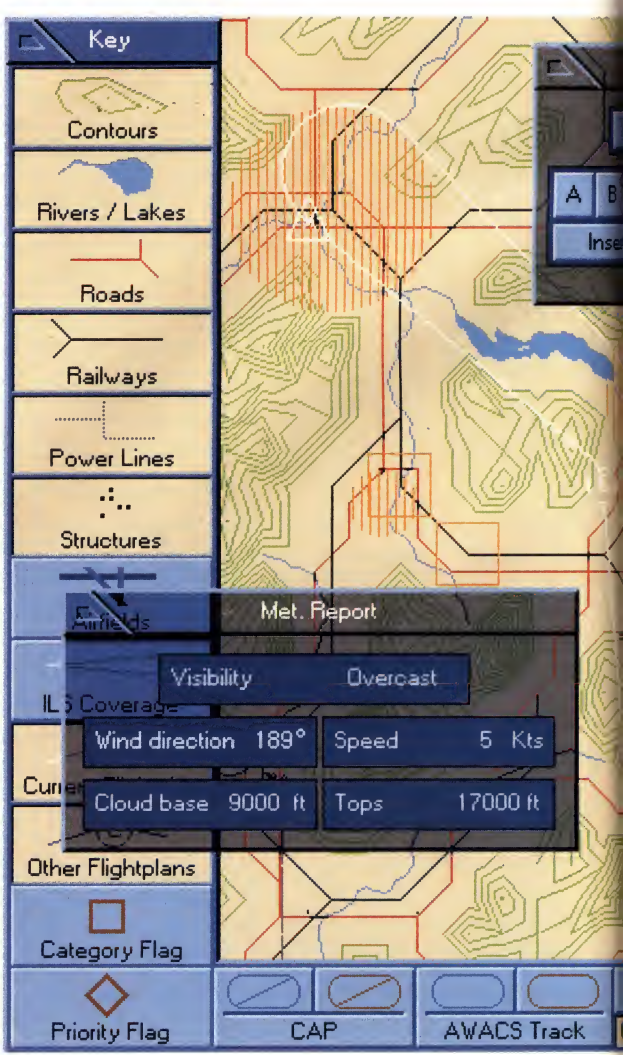
Training

Like the Simulator, there are different exercises with which to hone your skills on both Tornadoes (the IDS and the ADV), only this time you can't toggle any of the reality factors. In other words your pilot, who was totally safe in the simulator, can now get killed.

Combat

Eventually it'll be time to click on the Combat icon, which opens up a brand new screen containing the four following options: Two Player, Mission, Campaign and Command. 'Two Player' is self explanatory: via direct link or modem you can fly head to head with another human being. 'Mission' is also pretty self explanatory: a series of missions, all 'real' (i.e., no toggling things to your requirements) and with the enemy most definitely turned *on*!!! Oh, and by the way, there are three different War Zones in *Tornado*... three different landscapes. At 20 missions per zone that means 60 missions overall. Still not enough for you? Good, because we're only at the tip of the *Tornado* iceberg. Next comes the Campaign option, which is split into two types ('easy' and hard) and then multiplied by three (given the different War Zones) meaning you've got six campaigns overall: three 'easy' and three hard. In the 'easy' type of campaign you're told which target(s) to attack and are only in charge of one plane – your own. The trouble is that every single thing your Tornado actually *does* is down to you, which means you'll be using the Mission Planner to define your own flightplan – and believe me when I say that defining a workable flightplan can be nightmarishly complicated, even just for one aircraft. (If you used the Mission Planning section in *Falcon 3* and thought yourself rather clever I'd better point out that in comparison with *Tornado*'s it's merely a toy: a child's plaything). Don't panic though, because planning a mission in *Tornado*, once you've understood the basic ground rules, is probably even more enjoyable than actually *flying* the mission – and it certainly takes longer. Much longer. An average mission, to fly, will take about 20 minutes. Planning it, however, could easily take two hours... but planning is one of those activities where you don't notice time passing: you're too involved doing 1001 things that I won't even begin to go into because (a) there's no room and (b) the manual does a far better job than I'm capable of. All you need know for now is that the Mission Planning section of *Tornado* will impress you so deeply your socks will be blown off. In fact I cannot emphasise this enough: it's absolutely incredible.

Tornado Fact:
While Terrain Following, the Tornado actually 'panics' if it thinks it's going to crash into something.



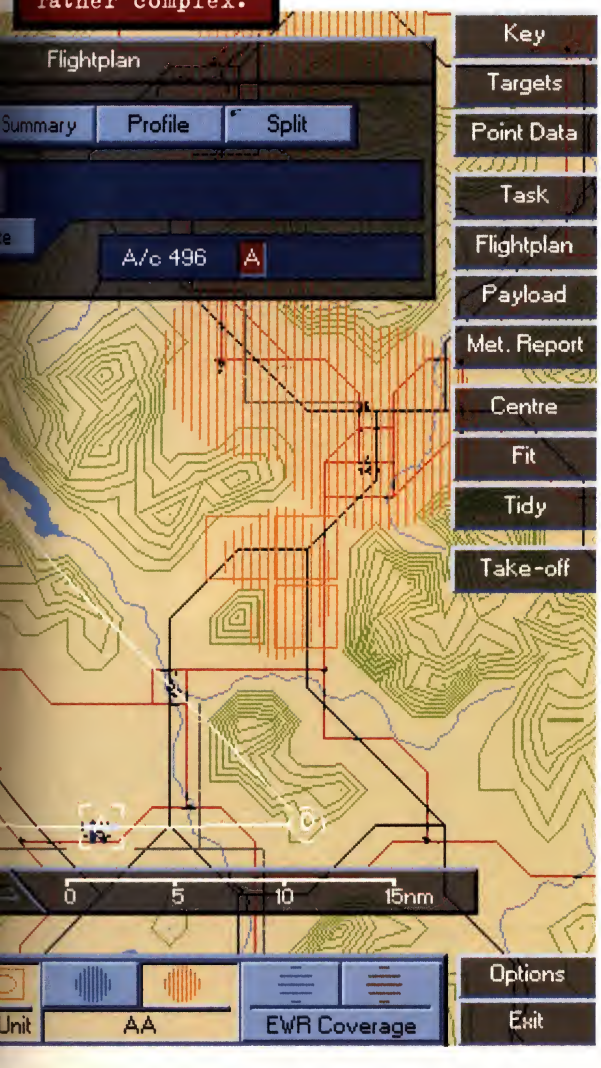
The Mission Planner again. Clicking on the Key icon (top right) brings up the vertical bar to the left and the horizontal bar along the bottom. Using this key you can toggle the map detail. You can also highlight areas of particular enemy (and allied) activity. Where are the AWACS? Or the CAPs? I've highlighted suspected enemy SAM, triple-A and ground force areas. After the Key icon comes Target (the Target Browser). Then it's Point Data which is the Target Browser in reverse. Next down is Task, which tells you what you've got to hit, where it is, and how the war's going. The Flightplan icon gives birth to several windows. Then there's the Payload icon, which opens the rather impressive Weapons Loading window. Met Report gives you weather info. The Centre and Fit icons alter the map display, and the Tidy icon closes all the windows automatically. To move about the map and to zoom in and out, you use the right mouse button. This map is from the Campaign game. (The Command game has added icons, such as Intelligence etc.)

'For the terminally impatient there are two quickstart missions...'

On with the campaign(s)

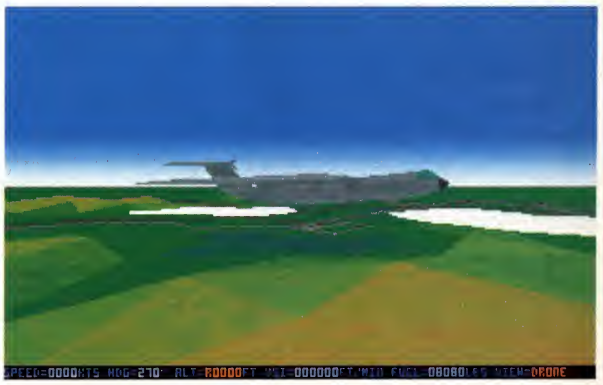
So where were we? Ah yes, you're told what to hit, you define your flightplan(!), you load your weapons and fuel, you take off, and you hopefully then return to base. Now it's time for the debriefing session, which is always very accurate and tells you exactly what you didn't want to know; for instance that your attack on enemy airfield number three was 100% unsuccessful because you accidentally toss-bombed your entire load onto a petrol station two miles beyond. And then you're given a war update ready for the next phase. Yes, like *Falcon 3, Birds of Prey* and *Harrier AV8B,* the war in *Tornado* is ongoing: the front line isn't static, and the missions continue until one side wins. So those are the basics: you're given the directive and you deal with *one* aircraft. But that's the 'easy' campaign type. Remember I said there were two? Well, the hard campaigns *(Impossible more like. Ed.)* are much the same but for one important difference. Not only are you responsible for just your own Tornado, you're also expected to create flightplans for a whole formation. Aaaaargh! I remember once reading James Joyce's description of what Hell would be like: he got it wrong. But these harder Campaign sections are where you pick up the really juicy promotions for your pilot – and to enter the Command section of the game he'll need to either be a Wing Commander or Group Captain. (Unless you're using the default pilot I mentioned earlier of course, because he already *is* a Group Captain.)

Tornado Fact:
It's not just a case of key 'A' for autopilot, because there are three totally different auto-pilot modes, all rather complex.



Command

If you think things have sounded tough thus far, then I ought to mention the words 'excrement' and 'air conditioning', because this really is where the shit hits the fan. You know in the campaigns there were these sort of invisible blokes above you, telling you which targets to go for? Well, they were the Group Captain and the Wing Commander. But now *you're* the Group Captain (or Wing Commander), so you still have to do everything you did before – flightplans for all the lads and so on – but now you first have to decide what targets you're going to actually attack in the first place. And when. Which means you'd better have a pretty firm grasp on the reason 'why', so it's lucky you're now party to a great deal of intelligence denied to you at lower ranks. Be warned that as Wing Commander or Group Captain you'll be spending unfeasibly long periods of time in the Mission Planner, and that, when you finally do go to bed, the Mission Planner will appear in at least one of your dreams. (I had one in which it was a tablecloth that I'd spilt some sort of weird egg stuff on, but you won't be interested so I won't elaborate).



(Top) With a bridge that long it'd be pretty hard to miss. (Middle Top) This is the Tornado in-cockpit 'look up' view (or, in this case, the 'look down' view). (Middle Bottom) Cycling through the other planes in the game, you often come across a sitting duck. Finding it, however, is another matter. (Bottom) Final approach from the novel, if slightly use-free, 'below aircraft' external view camera. (What are the Digital Integration team on?) Oh, and please note the absence of the all important (I reckon) shadow.

A word on air combat

The ADV of the Tornado flies much the same as its sister the IDS. In other words it's no F16, and so not much cop as a close range fighter. This is compounded in-game by the fact that (a) there's no padlock view and (b) the 'look up' view from the cockpit is crap (you look up too far, you can't see your HUD). With perseverance things do get better – and you *do* learn a few nifty 'tricks'. The very brilliant thing (for reality buffs, anyway) is the scaling of the other aircraft, by which I mean *real.* So, to actually stick on an enemy's tail and take him out with your cannons is no easy task. Which is good. Obviously.

REVIEW Tornado

Tornado Fact:
You use the mouse to move the target/waypoint crosshairs around on your Tornado's radar screens.

Weapons (not including cannons)

For your air-to-air encounters you've got a choice of two: the American AIM9-L all aspect infra-red (which you'll no doubt be familiar with) and the Sky Flash all aspect radar (the British version of the AMRAAM). For those air to ground moments there are the following, all of which are British: (1) The BL-755 medium weight cluster bomb, which contains 147 anti-tank/fragmentation bomblets (wahay). (2) The 1000 lb general purpose freefall bomb (yawn). (3) The retarded 1000 lb bomb... i.e., with a parachute to slow it down. (4) The JP-233, a totally brilliant heavyweight airfield attack and area denial submunition dispenser which makes Durandel look like a pile of old cack. (5) The BAe/Marconi ALARM, an anti radiation missile which you may be familiar with in its direct mode (i.e., aiming straight at radar emitting target), but not in its indirect mode, in which you fire blind at suspected radar sites miles and miles ahead (which you'll have tagged during Mission Planning). The ALARM cruises towards the suspected target and then soars up to 10000 feet where it deploys a parachute, hangs nose down and scans the ground beneath. As soon as an enemy radar is turned on (i.e., as soon as they spot your Tornado) the ALARM detects it, cuts away from its chute, and drops as if it were a guided bomb. Wow! (6) Finally we have the 1000 lb laser guided bomb which is used in conjunction with the Tornado's TIALD system, and this is easy to explain. Remember the gulf war show on TV? Remember the item where the in-plane camera showed us the target? Remember the laser beam crosshair that was then placed? And the laser guided bombs that pounded in with phenomenal accuracy, even though they were dropped from a zillion feet? Well, you can do all of this in *Tornado*, and it's unbelievably brilliant.

All in all...

In summing up (even though I've only skimmed the surface of the game so far) I'll mention *Tornado's* only real faults, which are: (a) there's no shadow under your plane in the external view, which is the most annoying thing in the world as far as I'm concerned; (b) there's only one crash sequence which is fine for belly landings, but looks silly for anything more severe; (c) the frame update's a bit squiffy on lower end machines, although I reckon you should be able to live with it; (d) there's no replay facility, and (e) Digital Integration make absolutely no concessions to the fact that you have to play the part of both pilot *and* navigator; sometimes you'll find yourself needing to perform five or more consecutive single and double key presses in the space of ten seconds, while at the same time moving from the front seat to the back seat and simultaneously checking instruments while clicking on the mouse buttons. (In reality the pilot could just say: 'Arm the ALARMS... no, give me clusters... no, give me the ALARMS again'). Mind you, I suppose the frantic keyboard action is an exciting alternative to *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing*. And anyway, even with these gripes, I still have to conclude that *Tornado* is simply brilliant. The depth. The realism. The chance to become an armchair expert and bore everyone senseless when the next proper 'TV war' breaks out. A word of warning to you before I go though. In case you hadn't already guessed, *Tornado* is aimed at propellor heads. In other words it's bloody hard work, and what you get out of it depends entirely upon how much you put in. Comprendo?

PC ZONE score

The more you play, the deeper it gets – eventually you'll need a bathyscaphe. Not for beginners.

93

Price: £44.99
Out: Now
Published: Digital Integration
Telephone: 0276 684 959

PC ZONE specs

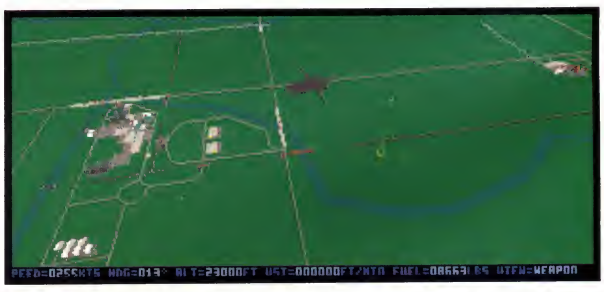
Minimum Memory: 615K
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 10Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Roland
Controls: Keyboard, Joystick, Mouse recommended
Comments: Minimum memory 555K without digitised sound.

Bunny And Ginger Go TIALD* Bombing

*Thermal Imaging And Laser Designation System

Bunny: Don't you love these TIALD runs? I'm picking up SAM and triple-A, but we're way too high for them. The cowardly custard dirty stinking lowlife yellow chickens!
Ginger: Apparently we've got to go toss bombing tomorrow.
Bunny: Uh-oh! I think I'll probably be going sick with a tummy ache again. Anyway, how's the target acquisition going?

Ginger: Er, fine. I'm locked on to a home for visually impaired orphans at the moment. I can see some of them playing.
Bunny: A strange target. Are you sure it was in the briefing?
Ginger: No, we're meant to be taking out aircraft hangers, but this is the best lock I've ever had and I don't want to waste it.



Bunny: Bombs away then. Are you zoomed in Ginger? They'll be showing this on telly tonight so it's got to look good...
Ginger: Roger Bunny, zooming in on camera one.
Bunny: Excellent. Those little blind kids are going to be in for the shock of their young and underprivileged lives in about 30 seconds...

Ginger: Yes... Yes... Yes... That's a Delta Hotel. All four geese.
Bunny: It's a Charlie Foxtrot Bravo Tango Mike Alpha Triple Niner Zero Foxtrot Foxtrot Hotel! Mike Delta Charlie! Whistle And Flute! My Old Man's A Dustman!
Ginger: Uh? What does that little lot mean?
Bunny: Not a lot, but it'll sound bloody good on the telly.

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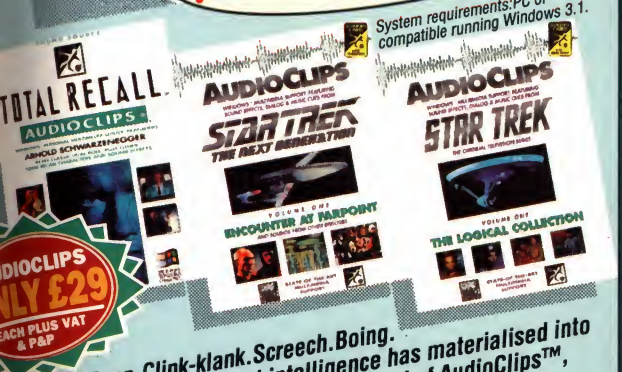

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Sensible Soccer

Was Picasso a truly great painter, or a magnificent draughtsman but only a mediocre colourist? And why were his hands so small and paw-like? Was he a monkey after all? Patrick McCarthy fails to think of a Sensible introduction.

Obviously for real fanatics the most important option below is Highlights, which allows you to relax, after the hustle and bustle of a match, and watch all those glorious goals in full.

ON THE AMIGA, there are crap and mediocre football games, there are good football games and there is *Sensible Soccer*. It is worshipped with the kind of fervour usually only reserved for films featuring Sid James nude. The *Sensible* games and league competition have been a regular office feature for a long time, now. Huge fortunes have been amassed, only to be thrown away in the kind of spur of the moment 'double or quits' madness usually confined to irritating TV advertisements. Whole lives have been ruined. Burgeoning careers have been destroyed by addiction to the drug known as 'Sensi.'

'I can handle it,' you see newcomers muttering to themselves; 'I'm only having a three-minute friendly.' But there they are, a week later, huddled in the eerie green light from the monitor at three in the morning, playing ten minute, two leg Cup games with extra time and penalties switched on. It isn't long before you know you'll catch them in the office on Saturday mornings, when they think no-one will be around, playing two player games on their own to sort out a few dead ball routines.

'Entertainingly, some teams seem to have made a pact with the devil...'

'I'm not practising,' they'll gibber, wild-eyed, 'I'm just, er... waiting for someone'. These addicts are more victims than criminals. But how long must we wait, how many lives must be destroyed, before the government steps in and does something for these people. Doesn't anybody care any more?

(So it's quite a good game, then? A Reader.) You could say that. Everybody loves it; even former non-games playing Art Editors are in its thrall. What strikes you about it is that it has obviously been put together by people who like football. It's got a great feel. The first time you play it you get a silly grin on your face. It's fun, and utterly addictive, and I've been waiting for it to appear in a format I can have for my very own (PC, Megadrive or SNES – I don't care – for over a year. You know what's coming, don't you? (Especially if you're one of those people who look at the score a game gets before you decide whether to read the review or not). It's going to be one of those tremendously funny footballing jokes along the lines of: 'I'm gutted/I'm sick as a parrot'. You guessed it.

Early doors

When you first load it up you get mixed impressions. It certainly looks the same as the Amiga version. All the same options are there. (These are explained elsewhere, for those new to the game.) Unfortunately, the theme tune is replaced by a monstrosity. This is a tragedy. I love that tune. I often hum it to myself on tubes, to make sure I get a carriage to myself. (It's either that or the Bodyform advert; they both work equally well.) I suppose, if you hear a tune often enough, you'll hum anything eventually – it's how Brotherhood of Man get all their hits – but this one just doesn't have it.

Main stand view

The game set-up options allow control over game length (you can have three, five, seven or ten minute games), type of pitch (wet, hard, icy, etc.) and stuff like that. The main team selection screen has either 40 national teams or 64 club teams from all over Europe: everyone from Valletta and Fram Reykjavik to AC Milan and Marseilles, all of whom are more or less up to date, squad-wise. The same as the Amiga, and all okay so far. Playing the game, however, you find yourself in a 'good news/bad news' situation. ☞

GOALIES

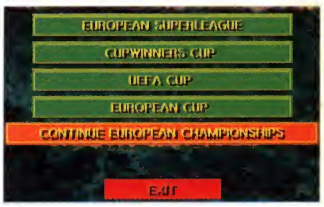
Like every player on the pitch, goalies are individually, and secretly, rated out of 16. The chances of them reaching any one shot are calculated according to the following complicated formula: (1) What are the general chances of anyone reaching it? (2) How are these altered by the goalie's rating? (3) And the player's shooting ability? (4) Is Andy 'Lucky' Butcher using the goalie? (5) If so, it must be PSV Eindhoven. (6) It's a save.

Your destiny lies in the hands (or gloves) of a computer controlled goalie. Please Lord don't let him be Scottish.

The expression kick and hope springs to mind.

In a moment of tactical eccentricity McCarthy, having won a throw near his opponent's goal, elects to throw the ball into touch.

For those whose attention span is uninfluenced by years of watching MTV there's a range of leagues and cups to play through.



ALL IN THE GAME

There are as many game types available as there are foot diseases in the average football changing room.

CUP

Make up your own cup competitions, choosing the teams you'd like to include, how many will be controlled by human and how many by computer. You decide how many legs each round is played over, from a normal round all the way to the final. You can have away goals counting double in the event of a draw, and extra time and penalties if your local police are particularly expensive, or try telling them it's an open air opera and have limitless replays. You even choose the type of pitch that will be used.

LEAGUE

Make up your own leagues. Again, you choose the teams yourself, and decide how many you'll have in a league: as little as two, and up to 20. You play each team however many times you want (up to ten) and decide whether to have two or three points for a win.

SPECIALS – NATIONAL TEAMS

You can take a national team of your choice through the real, actual world cup qualifying groups. There are six groups to play, but annoyingly, you don't get to play the finals themselves: everything stops when you qualify. You can also play a European Cup (32 teams on a knockout basis), a League of Nations (16 teams playing in league format) and the real, actual European Championships (eight teams in two groups).

SPECIALS – CLUB TEAMS

You can select a club from one of the 20 in the fictitious European Superleague, and play in a league format for vast sums of money to audiences of hundreds. You can also play in the Cup-Winners Cup, the UEFA Cup and the European Cup, although many of the teams have been duplicated for these competitions. Bribery seems to be as rife here as it is in real life.

A reminder of the days when men were men, footballers were footballers and Jimmy Greaves couldn't get a game.

SPECIALS – CUSTOM TEAMS

The jokey, custom teams also have their own tournaments – the booby league, turkey tournament, chicken league and egg cup. Teams include the England cricket team, an Australian team with Noleen from *Sylvania Waters,* a team of 'Wild Women,' and one or two people's ideas of what the current England team should be. These kind of teams are usually more fun to make up yourself.

REVIEW Sensible Soccer

At last the chance to play Fram Reykjavik against Panathinaikos. What game gives you more?

TEAM RATINGS

Each team is individually rated and has three designated 'stars' who perform better than their team mates – although Benfica, for some reason, has four. It's all relative though. To take an extreme example, Milan's stars will be better than Valletta's; in fact Milan's normal players are better than Valletta's stars. The system falls down when the star is given to a goalkeeper – like with Inter Milan, for example. Given the vagaries of goalkeeping 'form', this is just a wasted star. Pick another team instead.

LET'S SEE THAT AGAIN, BRIAN

Sensible Soccer gives you an automatic action replay after a goal is scored, which you can switch off. You can summon the replay yourself at any point in a game, anyway, and save any piece of play you're particularly proud of to disk for all time. This is useful for loading up and showing to reluctant-to-go guests at dinner parties.

Should I mention at this point that it's not as good as the Amiga original? *(Go on then, but be quick. Ed.)* You probably guessed it wouldn't be. It doesn't run as smoothly, speeding up both at the start and end of a segment of action.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Sensible Soccer

Other PC football games

Sensible Soccer on the Amiga

☞ **The good news:** It's a football game, it has loads of options, it's on the PC, and you can actually play football with it.

The bad news: It's twice as fast as the Amiga original. Where the Amiga version gives you time to get the ball under control and play a measured 'continental' passing game, the PC version is like the English Premier League: all hectic pace, clattering tackles and the ball whizzing about like a table tennis ball (except when it hits a post, when it inexplicably drops motionless, and is easy prey to poaching forwards). So, it's faster. Once you've adjusted to the pace, that should be bearable.

The other bad(ish) news: Unfortunately it has a few bugs. We set up a three-player World Cup qualifying game, playing as England, Holland and Norway (more about those elsewhere). To our surprise I, as England, had to play myself, as England. I played it to see what would happen. I won 23-0 (quite easily with no opponent), but England had a 23-23 draw in their record, they'd played one game more than they should have, and didn't play San Marino or Turkey in their group. This happened twice.

> 'It's a football game, it has loads of options, it's on the PC and you can actually play football with it.'

Another bug: you can tell who you're controlling because their number appears above their head. Players in this version are not numbered correctly: they pop up all over the place with numbers given to them at random. Either that or Ian Wright and Paul Ince both have ginger hair.

Now to the non-bug moans. Computer controlled teams are a lot more stupid and easier to beat. Too many times computer forwards have shot with totally the wrong aftertouch so that the ball curves harmlessly away towards the corner flags. Goalkeepers – always controlled by computer in this – are also not as good as the Amiga version.

The sound is barely adequate. Even with a Sound Blaster you don't get the noise of players kicking the ball, only crowd noises. Whistles and other effects are shrill beeps. Without a soundcard it has all the atmosphere of an episode of *Take The High Road*. The graphics are fine, but although it looks to us like the players are slightly bigger and you see less of the pitch, this has been officially denied.

Ein Staffe Og Et Sjelmord

It's difficult to get a satisfactory set-up for playing the game. Admittedly, a large part of this is due to general difficulties with PCs and joysticks anyway, and seem to be rooted in a kind of PC anti-arcade game snobbery. Anyway, most analogue joysticks play the game poorly (except for the Gravis Analog), and decent digital joysticks are hard to find for the PC.

We tried our fave Amiga sticks with a digital-to-analogue converter (which, at £15.99 each, aren't cheap) but these aren't ideal, as the sticks keep becoming 'un-calibrated,' and the ball keeps shooting off to the left. Keyboard control is a nightmare: it's difficult to get any aftertouch unless you have the combined keyboard skills of Mavis Beacon and Oscar Peterson, and turning with the ball is simply impossible.

Two player games are difficult to play on a fair basis, unless you have (a) a two-joystick card and two joysticks (with whatever appropriate contraptions you need to enable them both to work), (b) someone who likes playing with a keyboard or (c) an Amiga.

Forget the relative merits of the long ball or passing game. What really matters is whether there's room for yellow socks and blue shorts in the modern game.

BRIAN MOORE'S HEAD

Every team in the game can be altered with the 'Edit Team' option in just about every area except their performance. You can change the team name, its country of origin (if it's a club) and the coach's name. The players can all be renamed and moved to different positions (although defenders – apart from Paul Warhurst – won't get many goals, forwards won't make many vital defensive tackles, and so on). Their attributes are not shown, and are unalterable. You can change their faces and hair colour, too. Needless to say, their first and second choice kits can be altered, with a choice of eight colours plus black and white to combine in subtle but exciting colourways.

No-one likes us

Perhaps you can argue that if you haven't seen the game in its 'proper' form, you won't mind – or maybe even notice – a lot of the stuff listed above. Unfortunately we have; and we know how much better the game could, and should, be and can't help harping on about it. It doesn't have the attention to detail of the original: select England vs West Germany in the Specials section on the Amiga, and you play the 1966 teams and the screen switches to black and white. It has obviously been put together with the sort of care and attention to detail the PC version lacks.

It has been copied from the Amiga version, but without any additions to cater for the PC market. For example, there's no reason why you shouldn't be able to save as many cup and league competitions as you could possibly want on the PC since there's rather a large hard drive for you to put it all on, but you're still restricted to the same number of saved games as the Amiga version. There are faults in the substitution and tactical screens which could have been corrected in this release, but haven't. When you think that they've introduced changes to the Megadrive version, out quite soon, it's even more annoying. It's all on a plain 720K disk, and it still costs more than the Amiga version, and it's not as good.

Overall, it's still an okay game that will appeal to footie fans desperate for a PC fix, it's streets ahead of the PC opposition and will provide entertainment if you have all the extras necessary to get a good two player game going. Even so, after over a year's wait, it's disappointing. It should have been much, much better. When AVR convert *The Chaos Engine* for the PC, I hope they get that one right. Back to the Amiga, then. What a shame. Z

FLIPPIN' HECK REF, THAT WAS A FOUL, SURELY

Sensible Soccer plays to the new(ish) FIFA rules whereby a player is sent off automatically if he brings down someone in a scoring position. You can't replace the player by moving someone else into his position. Have two sent off and you're jiggered – you can try playing 5-3-2, but it doesn't work very well. Any defensive wall will have large gaps in it, and opponents will be able to run unhindered up the middle of the pitch while your full-backs back away. This almost always produces a rout, and is a weakness in the Amiga and PC versions.

Ideally, the team tactics screen should be available throughout, so that you can move players into the vacated positions. Interestingly, the Megadrive version out soon automatically closes the gap in the wall but still doesn't allow you to move someone else into defence.

Entertainingly, some teams seem to have made a pact with the devil, and can commit fouls almost willy-nilly without fear of action from the referee. Others get punished for anything. One team had five sent off (which I thought couldn't happen in real football without forfeiting the game, but there you go).

PC ZONE Specs

Minimum Memory: 1Mb RAM
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 12MHz
Installation: Optional
Minimum Hard Disk: 720K
Minimum Graphics: EGA
Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Roland, Beeper
Controls: Keyboard, Joystick

PC ZONE Score

The best football game around for the PC, but still not as good as it should've been.

70

Open Golf

Eisenhower's decision to drop the bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was reached during a round of golf, after he'd hit a triple bogie on the 15th at Palm Springs. Bad luck for the Japs? Yes, no doubt... but they were lucky he wasn't playing Ocean's *Open Golf* on a PC, or they might have lost Tokyo, Osaka and Fukajima as well. Duncan MacDonald explains why.

Below are a couple of fairly boring looking options screens. No guru shading here.

HAD EISENHOWER regularly played golf games on a computer, he would have understood about powermeters. All golf games have them, after all, and in essence they're much of a muchness. Whether horizontal, vertical or circular in nature they all demand the same basic skills: namely a good hand/eye co-ordination coupled with a consistent reaction speed.

The Ocean powermeter

Had Eisenhower regularly played computer golf games and had then come across Ocean's *Open Golf*, he'd have been a tad miffed and would have nuked every city in Japan. Ocean have tried something different with their powermeter, you see, and for my money (and for Eisenhower's too, I'm suggesting) it hasn't quite come off. Here's how the Ocean idea works (the points are illustrated by the screen shots on the right)...

1 **Tee shot complete**
It's a fairly straightforward par three and confidence was surging through your veins, but your tee shot went wrong and your ball is now buried in the heavy rough, about 60 yards short of the green.

2 **Pick your shot**
Having come to terms with your less than excellent positioning, you decide – due to the heavy rough surrounding your ball and the downward sloping green ahead – to use a sand wedge. So now it's time to set the power. 60%? Or maybe you'll want to err on the side of caution and go for 70%, preferring an uphill putt to a downhill one. Neither power setting is possible, however, because in *Ocean's Golf* there are only four strengths to choose from: you simply click on one of these balls, which denote (from left to right) 25%, 50%, 75% or 100% of full power. So, erring toward caution, you're forced to choose 75%. Which you know is too hard. But what else can you do?

3 **Take the swing**
Ah, but maybe all is not lost, because you're now in the fine-tuning stage of the Ocean experience. The centre of the cross-hair remains stationary while the picture of the golf ball moves around behind. The idea is that you move the golf ball picture (using the mouse) until the cross-hair is centred on the exact spot you wish to strike the ball. And then you press the button. But it's not, as you might have guessed, quite as simple as that, because although your mouse controls the movement of this little picture, the PC also has a say: and the language it's using is pure Randomese. Yup, the ball/grass picture wibbles about all by itself, to a greater or lesser extent, depending upon your chosen skill level. (On 'Amateur' there's a wee wobble, on 'Professional' it's as if you've overdone it on the sherry and on 'Master' it's as if you're Katherine Hepburn during an earthquake).

But surely a random element is good

And this is where we get down to the facts, because in real golf (especially, ironically, at the amateur level) there *is* a certain 'random' element: having sized everything up, picked the right tool for the job and decided on your strategy, there's always going to be that moment when the face of the club actually strikes the ball. If your stance is slightly incorrect, you're buggered. If a badger suddenly dashes out in front of you, you're buggered. And so on. But the point here is that the way the picture of the ball in Ocean's *Open Golf* jiggles around behind the crosshairs isn't like real life at all. It's just purely and simply random, the whole time, without stopping. It's not even as if you can hold your breath, or stop your heartbeat momentarily or whatever. It's something, and this is the rub, that you can actually *never* master. It just wibbles.

So you weren't much good?

And this is where I get to 'cover my butt' as an American might say, because, as it happens, I actually managed to do a whole round on one of the courses and come in at one under par – on the hardest setting. But the point is that even though I did quite well, there was no satisfaction involved, because I knew it was more down to luck than skill. Think about it this way: if you get a birdie you say to yourself: 'Thank God for that' rather than 'Yes, I thought I played that particular hole excellently'. Like I said, there's no satisfaction... which means something is very, very wrong, surely.

'The program pretends that the planet Earth is in fact Phoebos, one of the tiny moons of Mars. You could spit to the horizon.'

What about the putting?

Aha! The putting. Okay, well at least the putting sections have a normal powermeter (100 feet, split into 20 feet increments), but unfortunately putting is also the point of the proceedings at which the graphics become more of a hindrance than the control method. The feeling of 'slope' is lacking on the greens, unless it's an extremely severe slope, and the togglable grid doesn't help a great deal either. Generally you just aim straight at the hole and either strike the ball (a) slightly heavily or (b) a bit softly.

But the graphics look good

And the graphics should look good, because they're texture mapped. Mind you, no matter how good they look in the stills on these pages, believe me when I tell you that when it comes to actually playing a round of golf, they're of no use whatsoever. The trouble with Ocean's *Open Golf* is that to free up processor speed (I presume), the program pretends that the planet Earth is in fact Phoebos, one of the tiny moons of Mars. You could spit to the horizon. Even on a large expanse of supposedly flat ground, whatever is happening 100 yards ahead of you is hidden... hidden behind a never ending downward 'hill'. You tee off in Kent. It's a middling par four. The green is in Sydney. Get the idea? We're talking small globes. ☞

IN THE BLOODY ROUGH

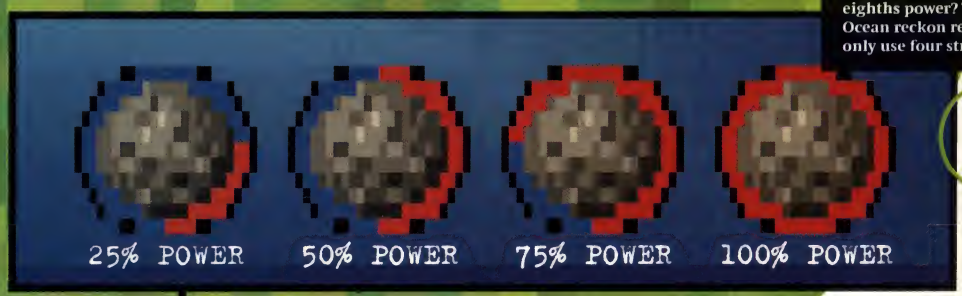
Sigh. It's a tough life being a golfer when you have to put up with the Ocean powermeter system...

TYPES OF PLAY

There are no computer controlled golfers in *Ocean's Golf*, so if it's a bit of competition you're after then it's necessary to call in some real human beings. With these real human beings (up to four including yourself) you can play the standard British style stroke play, the slightly more American style match play, the golf gambling game called Skins, a foursome or a fourball.

1 If only you could win a hole by simply picking the right club (the judges would hold up score cards saying nine, nine and 8.7). But, alas, things are never quite so easy.

2 So what are you going to go for? Quarter, half, three-quarter or full power? You want five-eighths power? Tough... Ocean reckon real golfers only use four strengths.



BALL MOVEMENT

The ball movement in Ocean's *Open Golf* isn't overly convincing. For a start there's a quarter second delay between your golfer striking the ball and it actually flying off into the air. Then, once the ball comes into land, it either (a) stops virtually dead even though it really ought to roll for quite a while or (b) bounces in slow motion. When you think what Archer McClean managed to pull off with an entire snooker table's worth of balls, there's no real excuse for this.

3 So you're forced to strike the ball with too much force. (That's if you can actually hit the thing, of course... it's wibbling about behind the cross-hair like Katherine Hepburn on angel dust.)

Not so good, huh?

No, not so good at all, because in real golf you can nearly always see where your ball is going to land – even after a corking 300 yard drive. You can *see* the stream. You can *see* the bunker. You can *see* the clumps of trees. So, if you want to avoid a certain spot, you simply aim away from it, or if you want to reach a certain spot you simply aim *at* it. Obvious, yes, but in Ocean's *Open Golf*, due to the foreshortened horizon, this is impossible, and the only way to check out the dangerous bits on any course is to select the fly-by option, whereupon a camera will zoom off and do a reccy for you. Then, when you switch back to your golfer's view it's down to whether or not you can remember where everything was. And you generally can't.

And that's about it

Yes, that's about it. And I'm afraid I can't think of anything positive to say about Ocean's *Open Golf*, apart from the fact that there are a handful of different 'camera angles' and a replay facility to play with. But everything else about the game depressed me, I'm afraid. It started with the powermeter and was downhill (literally, given the inexorable curvature of the landscape) from then on. Full marks to Ocean, I suppose, for trying something new, but no marks for anything else. If you don't yet own a golf game but think you might one day like to try one then I suggest you take particular note of the In Perspective box

(Top) The small moon hurtles through space as you attempt to get your ball a bit nearer the flag.
(Middle Top) A different course, the same tiny moon.
(Middle Bottom) Is that a small island ahead? Or the start of another continent?
(Bottom) The ball has landed badly somewhere beyond the horizon: maybe it has been caught by a space monster of some description.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Jack Niklaus Unlimited Course Design **plays a fairly average game of golf, but the addition of the course editor makes it quite a worthwhile purchase (designing your own courses is amazingly addictive).** ***David Leadbetter's Golf*** **from MicroProse is a brilliantly programmed vector graphic golf game with lots of things to fiddle with, loads of camera angles and excellent ball movement. Its only flaw is that the powermeter is far too easy to get to grips with – it's difficult to go wrong.** ***Links 386 Pro*** **is currently the best looking and most realistic golf game you can get, with heaps of add-on courses readily available. The problem is that you need a fast PC to enjoy it.**

Jack Nicklaus

Open Golf

David Ledbetter

Links 386 Pro

PC ZONE score

A disappointing foray into the world of golf sims from Ocean.

50

Price: £29.99 **Out:** Now
Published: Ocean
Telephone: 061 832 6633

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 585K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 16MHz recommended
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 5Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Sound Cards: Sound Blaster and Ad-Lib compatibles
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Here we see Ocean's menu system, which works quite nicely and – sadly – is probably the best thing about the game.

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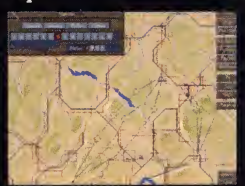
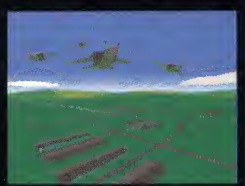
Pilot's cockpit

Stunning detail

Navigator's cockpit



Sophisticated mission planning



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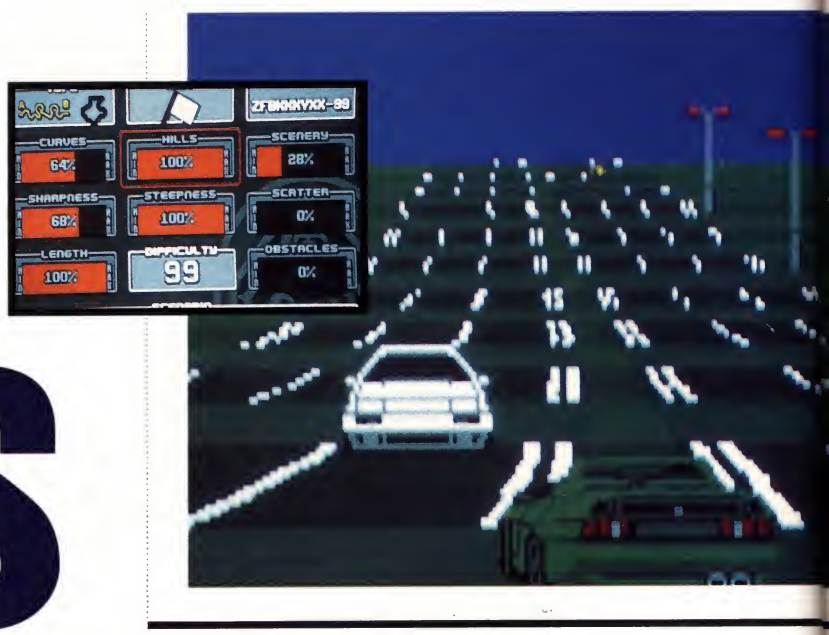


LOTUS – THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE

Patrick McCarthy has had one driving lesson in his life, on a derelict housing estate in Belgium when he was 12. The resultant destruction ensured he's steered clear of automobiles ever since. Naturally, we gave him etc etc.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Stunt Car Racer **is old and the graphics are sub-standard but it's still a good laugh if you want arcade excitement. For all-out crashing fun, buy a Megadrive and get *Road Rash II* – motorbike street-racing in which you beat up your opponents at 180mph. You know it makes sense.**

Crazy Cars 2

Test Drive 3

Stunt Car Racer

Lotus TUC

'WHO WANTS TO DRIVE a Lotus in an exciting new game from Gremlin?' Paul cried in the strangely high-pitched voice he gets when he's been drinking. 'Oooooh,' we squealed, 'Me, me, me, me, me!' wrestling our way over the desks, throwing aside copies of *Tornado*, *X-Wing* and *Titanic Blinky* in our maniacal haste to get the game of our dreams. Or maybe not. My memory's shot to hell these days.

Lotus – The Ultimate Challenge is an arcade game. No car set-ups to worry about, and a complete lack of anal-retentive appeal. There are three cars to play with, all made by Lotus, purveyors of fine spreadsheets to the masses.

There are various ways to play: racing around courses or along stretches of road, against the clock or against computer opponents in a championship and with one- or two-player options. Courses range from snowy ones, to desert ones to 'future' ones, all with their own little hazards. There's also a course-generator that allows you to decide the parameters for a course of your choosing, and a facility to combine any ten courses into a championship.

'Lotus don't like to see their cars being crashed into.'

Whether on track or road you're handicapped not only by obstacles and opponents but by your lack of a bottomless fuel tank. At some stage you're going to have to pull in for petrol. Many a race has been lost by misjudging this moment. The cars, despite their unique performance figures, all handle and perform similarly. Likewise choosing between a track and a road to race on has no effect; tracks don't often seem to repeat in the way tracks should, and some road sections repeat rather more often than you'd expect.

Lotus don't like to see their cars being crashed and hurt (except in *James Bond* films), so you can't crash in this game. This removes most of the enjoyment of a racing game straight away. Where's the thrill in racing through a fog-bound forest at 150mph if, when you plough head on into a tree, you merely slow down for a second, before zooming on unharmed? The terror of venturing into the wrong lane in dual-carriageway racing is also eradicated.

Distant voices, still drives

The sound, even with a Sound Blaster, is not particularly inspiring. The engine note is less like the roar of a powerful sports car than something produced by a six year old with a hose pipe and a sense of humour; every time I braked I kept looking around for the Wild West train, until I realised that the wailing horn noise was supposed to be squealing tyres. Contact with walls, tumbleweed or large boulders at the side of the road provokes a rustling like someone eating a packet of boiled sweets. However if you can live without engine noise then the in car stereo offers you a range of mid American driving music.

The sense of speed in *Lotus* is somewhat inconsistent. When you're accelerating, roadside objects hurtle past you and there's a great sensation of speed. Once up to speed, roadside objects and the dark and light segments of road occasionally seem to stay in the same spot on-screen and may even recede a little. At one point I had the sensation of being completely stationary, with cars reversing towards me.

Details, details

There's been little attempt to add details to the game – no matter how sharp the crest of a hill you fly over, you never leave the ground. The varying roadside surfaces have negligible difference on your car's performance (though you do slide around a bit on the dirt tracks). There are no brake

RECS

I used to have a dog called Recs. *(No you didn't. Ed.)* No I didn't. RECS is a fancy acronym for the course generator. As you can see, you don't actually piece together sections of track like a mini Scalextric. The attributes you'd like to give the course, along with the length and difficulty level (this just controls the speed of the opposition) are generated by the game, and if you like it, you save the code. All tracks in the game are given a code. You can collect codes for tracks you like and put them together into a nine-race competition using the Define option. (I did have a dog called Recs, despite what that bully says.)

lights on the car, and – even worse – no headlights in the night sections. It seems odd to me that Lotus are so concerned about their cars' image that they don't want to see them crashing in a computer game, but are quite happy to see them race through cities at night with their lights off.

Other people

Competing drivers have hilarious names such as Merry Walker and Nijel Mainsail. Unlike you they lead very easy lives, being unaffected by wind conditions, fuel shortage and do not slow down or skid when driving on treacherous wet or icy surfaces. They are also unaffected by the magical Turbo Zones and the Speed Trap Rays in the future race sections.

Whilst being utterly unambitious themselves, they resent success in others. You can set their level of competitiveness. At its highest level their sole aim in life is to stop you getting past. Overtaking becomes a nightmare of weeving and manoeuvring. It's this rather than the track that provides the challenge and excitement.

Double Dating

Lotus is one of those games that comes into its own in two player mode. The split screen (which was a fairly unique feature when it appeared in the first Lotus game) allows you to see both your own and your opponent's viewpoint. It's a shame, given the importance of the two player section, that the screen doesn't include a wing mirror view but this is still the most effective part of the game. Despite its flaws there were two player games of *Lotus* being played long into the night when the game first arrived in the *PC Zone* office.

Summing up

Although *Lotus* is not as good as it might have been (and is perhaps looking a little dated) it's still very playable and in two player mode pretty good fun. If you're looking for a genuine driving sim then look elsewhere. If, however you're looking for a knockabout arcade driving sim then Lotus is one of the best in its, admittedly small, field. Mind you, I wish you could damage opponents. They should have gone for the Austin licence. Just imagine it: Austin Princess – The Ultimate Smash-Up. *They* wouldn't mind crashes, explosions and detonations of thermo-nuclear devices. Z

High performance cars need high performance hi-fis.

One of these drivers isn't using Ultra White Detergent.

Split screen two player game, both players fighting over last place.

PC ZONE score

Nothing particularly new but good fun, especially in two player mode.

68

Price: £34.99 **Out:** Now
Published: Gremlin

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 286, 386 recommended
Minimum Speed: Not specified
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 1.4Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA only
Sound Cards: Roland, Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, Analogue Joystick, Freewheel
Comments: Needs DOS 2.0 or above.

Rags to Riches

***Rags to Riches* is a yuppies simulator. So we gave it to ageing hippie Mark Burgess.**

WHEN THE pound goes through the floor, television always interviews a 'market expert'. These are unattractive young men with loud clothes and clearly too much money. Your first thought is that Marxism has to be right, because there is no way these creeps can be anything other than wrong. Then you think: 'If I had the principles of a Port Said pimp, I could do that.' Here's your chance.

Rags to Riches is a market simulator. You play a ruthless capitalist gambling with other peoples' livelihoods in either 1929 or the 1980s. 1929 is the historic model of the Wall Street Crash and the 1980s emulates the panics over oil and gold and the massive over-valuation of bonds. So you must avoid the slump in one and the bust out of the other. And the window sill in both.

Lunch is not for wimps

Start as you mean to go on, by using other peoples' money. A gift from your parents lets you set up office. A computer (even in 1929 – now there's an advantage) shows you prices and holdings. Your Rolodex starts off with your mum (moral support), a nun (charitable gifts) and the employment agency. As you make money, you hire more staff and your Rolodex fills up with contacts. Network by 'phoning them and doing lunch.

> 'You have to flaunt it. Buy ridiculously expensive silk ties, cars and planes.'

These contacts are vitally important. Sometimes – especially outside their own sphere – they are wrong, but someone in the market will listen to them. The radio, television and press will keep you informed about the world outside and help you second guess the market. You can branch out to London and Tokyo in the '80s scenario, and what a fascinating insight into US attitudes they are. The Japanese are neat, young and enthusiastic with easily the most fanciable secretary. The English office is oak panelled with a drinks cabinet and a view of Westminster Cathedral and what looks like St Mark's, Venice. The secretary is a dragonish looking item from a '40s film, the apprentice looks skinny and ready to die while the pit runner is fat, untidy and drunk-looking.

Hiring and firing

The first person to hire is the secretary who fields your calls and lets the clients look up her skirt. This increases business. Next to hire is the pit runner – he buys and sells. There is a realistic delay as you issue instructions. As you watch the price soar he will ask for confirmation of your order. 'I said buy, you asshole!' you shout at the screen. The market can move 20 points while he farts about, so be sure to use the safety net feature. After the pit runner hire an apprentice. He'll keep an eye on things while you go out to the mall or the restaurant. Or he can run your foreign office. As you expand, hire a lawyer, who will fight off the SEC (Security Exchange Commission) and do some serious plea bargaining when you get caught. You need an accountant for every ten employees. Informants – in the SEC, IRS (Inland Revenue Service) or in rival firms – will give you vital warnings.

If you've got it, flaunt it

The game hinges on selling short – that is, selling things you don't own. Make sure that you're not too exposed. If your Net Worth (not the same thing as cash in hand) reaches zero, then it's cardboard city. Remember to call your mother at regular intervals as she will lend you money. The more secretaries you hire, the bigger your client base and the more you own.

It's not enough just to have money, of course. You have to flaunt it. Buy ridiculously expensive silk ties, cars and planes. Buy a new house or a holiday home. The problem with all these purchases is that they are non-returnable. If things start to go horribly wrong, you can't sell your house.

Wall street shuffle

One of the problems is that things take time, and a lot of it. I popped out to the shops to buy a car. It took me seconds but when I got back to the office, I found that three hours had vanished. I felt like Ray Milland in *The Lost Weekend*. 10:15 one morning, I clicked on the computer screen to check price movements. A quick glance and then back to the main screen. 11:30. This is crazy.

Another problem is that things happen over which you have no control. It's like *Floor 13*, where your reaction to events was hampered by being able to use only fairly blunt instruments. Apart from buying and selling, hiring and firing, you can give money to charity or bribe officials. Giving to charity keeps up your standing while you indulge in shady deals. Informants tell you what your rivals are doing or keep you one step ahead of the fuzz.

The game certainly has its moments of excitement and there is a strong element of strategy. There are three skill levels and the speed of the game can be altered. I felt it less fun than *Railroad Tycoon* because there is not much to show for your endeavours except money and a few rich man's toys. But people with more sense than me seem to find that fulfilling enough.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Obvious comparisons are *A-Train* and *Railroad Tycoon*. *Rags to Riches* is graphically better than either, but not as gripping.

A-Train

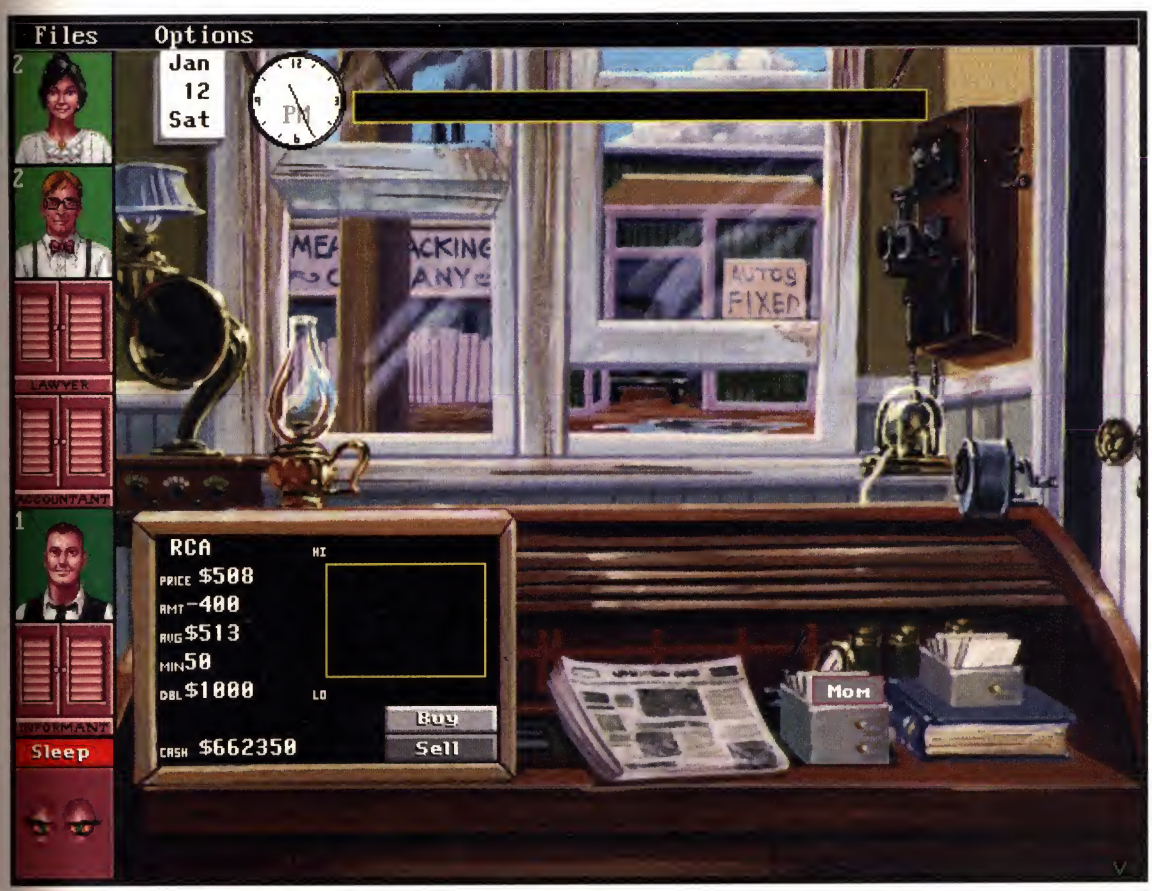
Buzz Aldrin

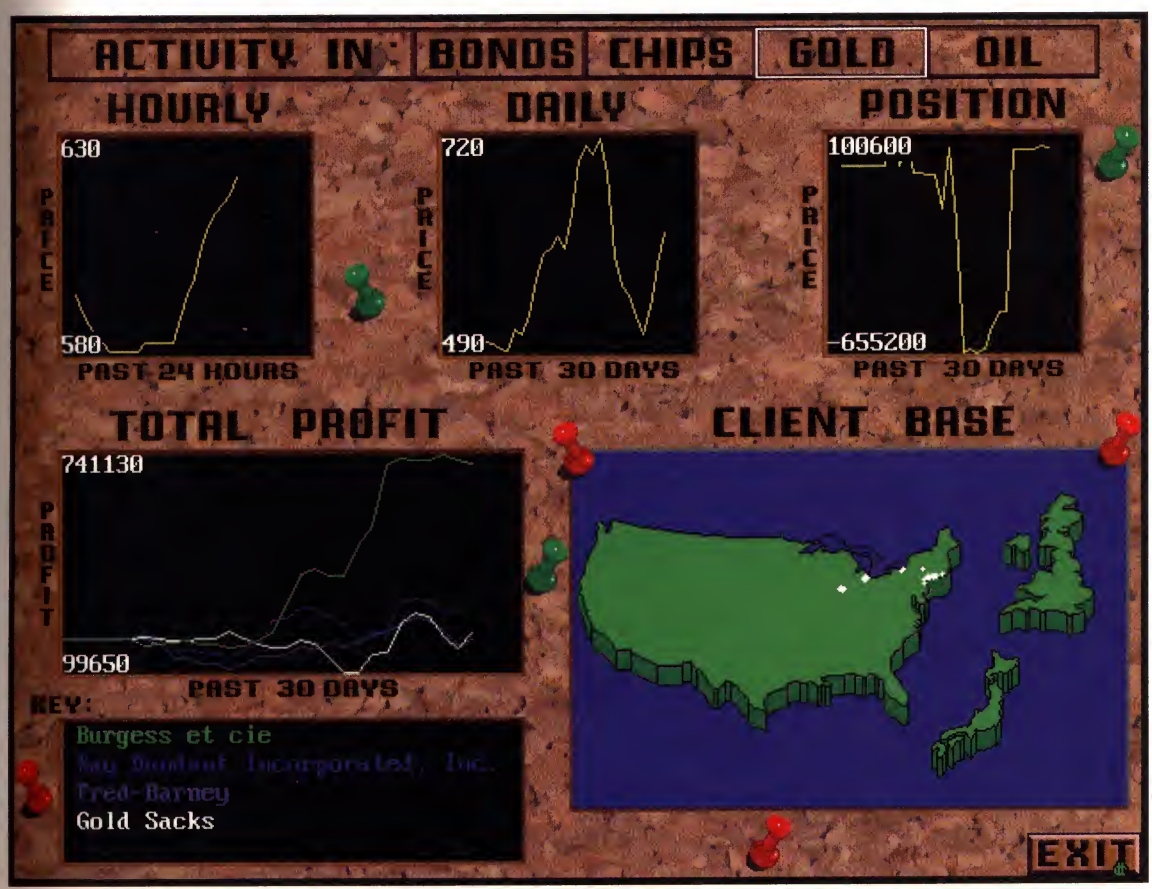
Floor 13

Rags To Riches

Railroad Tycoon

Sim City





PC ZONE score

lacks excitement; unlikely to have a long life.

60

Price: £39.99 **Out:** Now
Published: Interplay
Telephone: 0865 390029

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 12MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 15Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Sound Cards: Roland, Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Pro-Audio Spectrum, General Midi
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse – mouse recommended
Comments: DOS 3.1 or higher

(Top) 1929 – how tidy everyone looks! The bloodshot eyes on the bottom left mean I need sleep, not alka seltzer.
(Opposite) 1980s and it's those English guys with their big red buses and all. But my, who's their tailor?
(Left) Burgess et cie surging ahead. Tomorrow the world!

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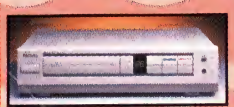

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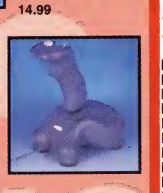

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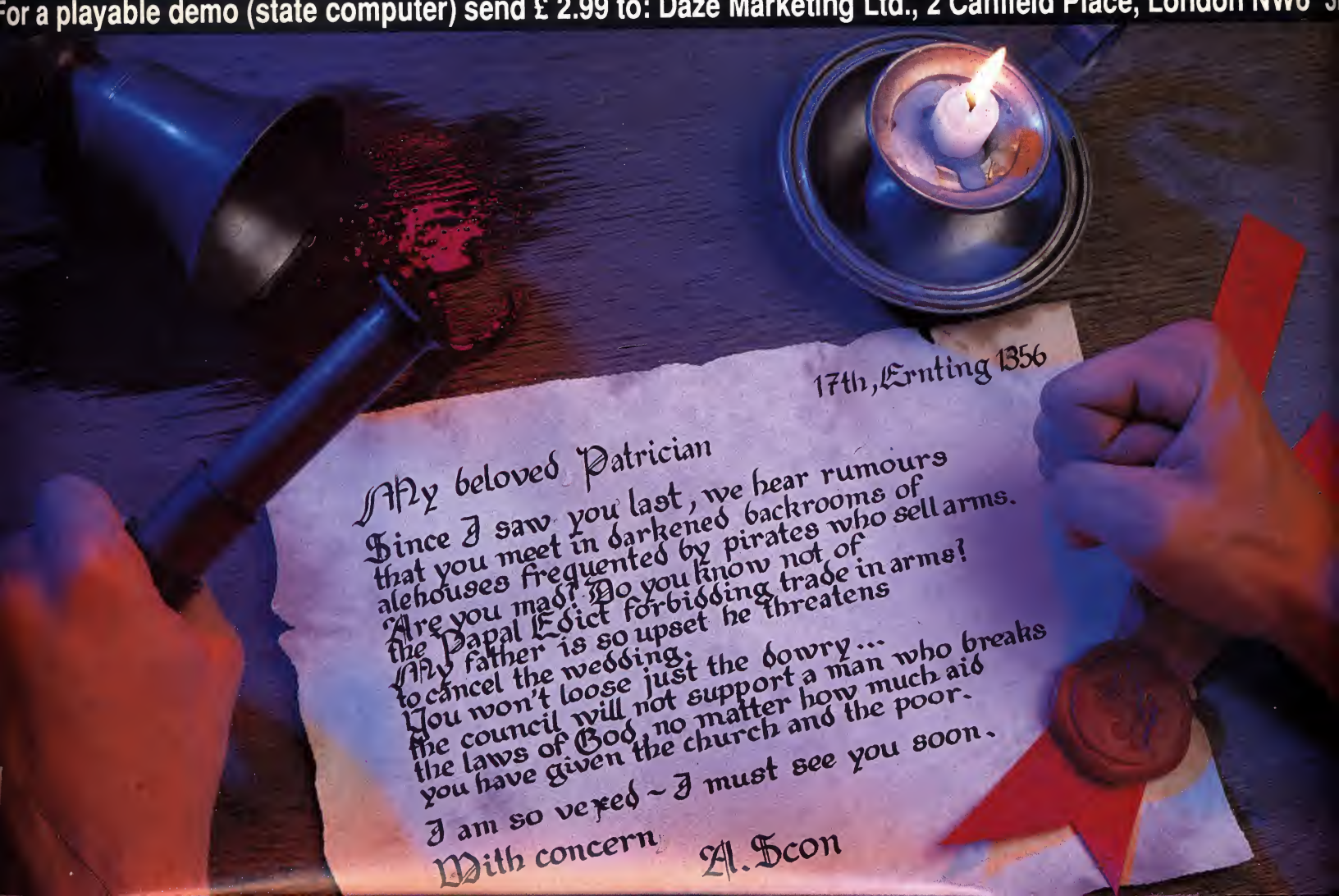


Blue Force

1. Another movie-like device is the flashback. Instead of going all wobbly you just remember the scene of your parent's murder in black and white.
2. Close-up scenes are all the rage these days. In order to clarify the mess of pixels moving about in the middle of the screen, up pops this close-up from time to time to stop you saying 'What was that supposed to be?'
3. I bet this low-life will be agonising over his latest crime for weeks. I mean, do you know how hard it is to get blood out of a carpet?

Despite knowing lots of jokes about truncheons and all the words to Laughing Policeman, Paul Presley finds that a policeman's lot is not a happy one.

I WAS EXPECTING A Lethal Weapon, what I got was more of a Dixon of Dock Green. I mean, all the elements for an exciting action-packed adventure are there. Motorbikes, maverick American cops, drug dealers, corrupt officials, guns. You'd think it would be impossible to miss out with those kind of ingredients, but *Blue Force* manages it.

Part of its problem is that it comes across as being so American middle-class suburban in its attitude that you find it very hard to take any of it seriously. Would you really expect hardened gang members to say things like: 'Sheeeit. Yo homeys pushin' dis' @$%!& too far man'? (And how do you pronounce @$%!& anyway?) Of course it wouldn't be fair to condemn a game simply for its attitude, so I'm going to condemn it for its lousy programming, its uninspired control method, its inability to create any kind of interest and its linear gameplay.

'There I was, pinned down behind a palm tree by a punk with a semi-automatic.'

I hate linear adventure games. Okay, I know almost every adventure game on the market is essentially linear, but at least most of them try to hide the fact. *Blue Force* practically thrusts it in your face. For example, early in the game I have to try to find a baseball card for an unhappy kid. Earlier I had been in the same room as the baseball card, I had looked at the baseball card and I had tried to pick it up but for some reason I couldn't. There was some kind of invisible force field around it preventing me from actually putting my hand on it and picking it up. It's not until later that I can go back, find it and then pick it up. I am firmly of the opinion that if something is on the screen you should be able to interact with it no matter what role it plays later on.

The end really came for me when I found myself involved in a shoot-out atop an island paradise. There I was, pinned down behind a large palm tree by a young punk with a semi-automatic. I'd tried returning fire but it didn't seem to help. Neither did trying to talk my way out of it. Then, out of sheer luck (or was it desperation) came a solution that was pure Douglas Adams in style. Quite simply I figured that if I completely ignored the ☞

(Above) A rather messy variation on the 'I was just cleaning it when it went off' joke.
(Main picture) No, there isn't a 3D driving bit to the game so don't get your hopes up. The 'smooth, easy-to-use driving interface' basically consists of pressing the Ignition button and selecting your destination. All the excitement of a real-life motorcycle policeman and less.

IN PERSPECTIVE

The original version of *Police Quest I* (back in, ooh... must have been '86) still rates as the most enjoyable Police-based adventure.

Blue Force

Police Quest I (EGA)

Police Quest III

LIVING IN A GHOST TOWN

Looks big doesn't it? The truth of the matter is that in this entire city there only seems to be about 20 people milling around (and half of those never leave one location). It isn't hard to convey a busy city scene, just take a look at *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis*. Whenever you were in a city location, there would always be random people just walking in and out of the scene (like movie extras). What's more you could even talk to them. The only other game to get more realistic than that was *Lure of the Temptress* in which not only were people constantly milling around, they all had there own 'real' lives if you decided to follow them around.

Blue Force could easily have done it. On this map screen you could have had little animated cars driving about. In the many street scenes you could have had people just wandering around (you wouldn't even have had to interact with them, just to see them would have been enough). As it is we have a city with a vast amount of real estate on offer and where the criminals outnumber the citizens (and there are only about six of them).

☞ fact that there was someone shooting at me, the problem would cease to exist in my mind and I would no longer be affected by it. Sure enough, I decided to just stand up and walk straight past him and couldn't believe my eyes when it worked.

I was able to just walk straight past someone shooting at me (or rather slide past since the graphic of me crouching behind the tree didn't actually change) and carry on as if nothing had happened. It was around this point in the game that I made my excuses and left. Only journalistic duty forced me to return to finish the thing, which, I might add, didn't take too long.

That's another of the problems *Blue Force* contains, although to be fair it shares it with a lot of other adventures of late. No, on second thoughts, why should I be fair? Just because it fails to solve a problem that existed before it came along, that's no reason for me to let it off. *Blue Force* is almost completely unchallenging. To solve practically any of the puzzles you just laboriously click each of your possessions on the subject at hand to eventually come across the solution.

The only other way of solving things is to use your range of actions and with only 'Look', 'Talk', 'Pick Up' and 'Walk' to choose from, what you can do in any particular situation is extremely limited. To solve a tense hostage situation you simply continually talk to the man until he gives up. Phew, talk about excitement (although if you did it would be completely out of context). It's not like you even get to choose what to say.

Blue Force is quite simply a poor adventure game – in every department. I can't even rely on the graphics or sound to provide some kind of positive aspect as neither of those are anything special. The key to a good police adventure is filling it with action and excitement. The trouble with 'real police techniques' (one of the game's marketing points) is that 'real police techniques' are dull. Games are like films, we play them to be entertained. We don't want documentaries, we want all-action heroes, defying death by the skin of their teeth and performing physically impossible stunts. If I wanted authentic police procedures I'd watch *Crime Monthly* on TV.

Sheeeit. Yo, homes, you pushin' dis' @$%!# too far, man!

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 10Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Sound Cards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Roland MT-32/LAPC-1
Controls: Mouse

PC ZONE score

Tiresome controls and sloppy design mar what could have been a decidedly average adventure.

35

Price: £39.99 **Out:** Early August
Published: Accolade/Tsunami
Telephone: 081 877 0880

1. If I had a particularly disgusting mind, that message on the blackboard could have a very different and sinister meaning. Luckily I don't so it doesn't.
2. Just to show that there's life outside the city, the second part of the game takes you to a deserted island. Or is it? (Of course it isn't. If it was it wouldn't be in the game. Sheesh!)
3. There is a good bit in the game when you get this sort of urban city life parody sketch. It's quite a witty look at the language of today's youth and... What? It's meant to be serious? Oh dear.
4. An early scene from *Reservoir Dogs*.
5. Ow. Down boy. Good doggie. Gerroff. Look, defenceless babies. Hah, he fell for the oldest trick in the book.

BLADE OF DESTINY: REALMS OF ARKANIA 1

'Hmm,' thought Paul to himself. 'a huge RPG with hundreds of skills, statistics and attributes, loads of characters and a quest for a mythical sword.' There was a short pause. 'Get Andy Butcher in here. Quick.'

THE ORCS ARE PLAYING up again. You know how it is: normally they spend all their time having inter-tribal scraps, but the moment you turn your back some jumped-up warlord character comes along, unites all the tribes under his banner and decides to go on a serious rampage into human lands.

Luckily though, this is fantasy role-playing land, and so it just happens that there's a way to stop the bastards cold. There's this sword, you see, that used to belong to some big warrior-king geezer, and the Orcs are scared stiff of the thing. Unfortunately no-one knows where it is.

But, all is not lost. There's a map that shows where the sword lies. Okay, so it's in nine pieces, and yeah, you guessed, no-one knows where they are either. Still, if everything in life was simple then... er... life would be simple. *(Sigh. Ed.)*

But life isn't simple

In *Blade Of Destiny* your task is to recover the map fragments, find the sword and then wave it at the Orc warlord in a suitably threatening manner. To achieve this you control a group of six characters and range across the region of Thorwal, the Viking-based area of Arkania where *Blade of Destiny* is set.

You start off in the town of Thorwal. After wandering around for a bit you hear that the Hetman (King) is looking for some help. One conversation later and you're off, armed with the name and location of someone who might know something about the sword or the map. You hope. The majority of the game is taken up with the hunt for the map fragments. It's something of a medieval detective story, with you tracking down the descendants of the last expedition of Hetman Hyggelik, the original owner of the sword, and persuading them to help you. In-between this there are various tasks and encounters, some unrelated to the main story and others closely linked. Certain people won't help you unless you do something for them in return, and others are hard to find or require talking to in just the right way lest they slam their doors in your face. Once all the various fragments of the map are found you trek into the wilderness of the Ork Steppes to find the sword, and then it's time for the grand finale with El Orco Bosso.

In fact, it's quite complex

Blade of Destiny is undeniably a huge and involving game. There are 52 towns and villages across Thorwal to explore, well over a hundred events and encounters and numerous plot twists. There are even diseases, herbs and the ability to make various potions and poisons. All in all, there's a lot to do and see. And this depth is the game's greatest strength. It really is quite absorbing, and will certainly take even the most skilful of players a long time to finish. There's a hell of a lot to do, and the game is fairly non-linear: you find yourself skipping backward and forward all over the place, and locations or people previously unavailable will become accessible as you discover more pieces of information. ☞

A GAME OF MANY MODES

As shown below, your characters in *Blade of Destiny* are controlled in four ways, depending on their situation.

EXPLORE MODE

When wandering about in towns or other locations the game uses the now familiar first-person perspective view seen in games such as *Eye Of The Beholder* – you can move forward or backward one 'step' and turn in 90° increments. The 'ball in a cup' compass at the bottom of the view shows your current facing. To the right of the main view window is the time indicator (the sun moves across the sky, and then the moon – clicking here gives an accurate display of the time), and beneath that are a group of icons representing actions available to your party. These change with the current location: in a shop you can buy or sell, in the wilderness you can hunt for food or search for valuable herbs, etc. Along the bottom of the screen are portraits of your characters. The green bar shows their life points, the red one their astral points (used to cast spells). The character on the far left is the current team leader; his or her skills should be appropriate to the terrain (don't put your claustrophobic elf in the lead when in a dungeon, and don't expect your street-wise thief to be much good when trekking through the wilderness). Double clicking on a character's portrait brings up their review screens.

Four everyday scenes from an adventurer's life. In the top left we see the stunning town of Orvil, fun capital of Thorwal (honest). Moving down to the bottom left is the camp scene, all marshmallows and childish songs. On the bottom right we see the imaginatively named smith, and finally, in the top right, the object of it all... a treasure chest. Just watch out for the poisoned trap.

COMBAT MODE

In combat the view switches to an isometric perspective similar to that of the *Ultima Underworld* series, allowing individual control of each character's actions in the fight. *Blade of Destiny* determines the order of initiative for all the people involved in the scrap, and then you control each character as his or her turn comes up. Characters can perform various actions, each of which uses a certain number of Movement Points, and some of which automatically finish a character's turn. Characters have eight MPs, but this number is reduced by the amount of gear being lugged around. The options available in combat are many and varied, ranging from simple movement, fighting and spellcasting to changing weapons and using special items. There is also the option to let the computer control the fight, with or without magic.

☞ But for all that, *Blade of Destiny* has its problems. The main one is that, well, it's not that much fun. There's nothing about it that immediately grabs you and makes you want to play it more and more. Apart from its size and complexity there's nothing that makes it really stand out. The graphics are passable rather than excellent, and the sound is best ignored – pitiful 'medieval' tunes and weak effects, the latter requiring far more disk access than seems reasonable, and slowing the game down noticeably. The controls work, but not amazingly well – they're sort of 'average'. And the gameplay is really nothing new.

Destined for greatness?

So what you've got with *Blade Of Destiny* is a large, complex, absorbing game with loads to do, but nothing that really makes it shine. The 'Novice' and 'Advanced' modes are a nice idea, obviously designed to make the game appeal to your average 'Joe gamer' as well as the hardened RPG saddies like me. Unfortunately it's in 'Novice' mode that the game's lack of that vital 'je ne sais quoi' shows the most. In 'Advanced' mode the game's sheer detail and complexity saves it, but when you take that away you're left with a relatively mediocre game.

Nonetheless, if you are a fan of RPGs, and fancy one that'll take a lot of play before it's exhausted, then I'd certainly recommend *Blade of Destiny*. It may not be groundbreaking, but it's absorbing to play and large in scope. ZZ

Making life complicated

One of *Blade of Desiny*'s unique features is the choice of game complexity. At the start of each game you can choose between the 'Novice' or 'Advanced' games. This choice doesn't affect the difficulty of the game, but controls the level of detail you have to cope with. 'Novice' mode handles all the values for skills and magic, including any increases due to experience, and then highlights the best character for any task your party is required to perform. This lets beginners (or those with little or no interest in loads of statistics) play the game simply and easily. In 'Advanced' mode you have access to the full statistics for your characters, control any increases, and decide which character is best suited to a given task, all of which makes the game far more complex.

The choice of 'Novice' or 'Advanced' is given to you each time you load the game, so it's perfectly possible to start playing in 'Novice' and then change to 'Advanced', and then change back to 'Novice' if it all gets too much for you.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Eye Of The Beholder 2, Ultima VII and Betrayal At Krondor all have elements in common with *Blade*. But remember folks – these are only comparative scores and not marks in their own right.

Ultima VII

Betrayal At Krondor

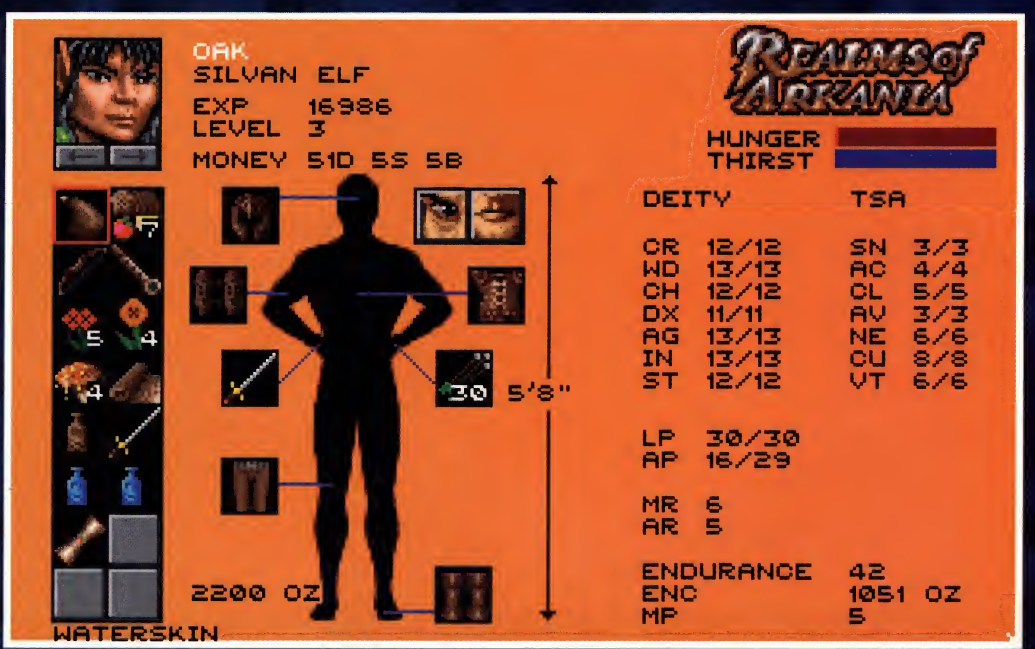
Blade Of Destiny

Eye Of The Beholder

REWIEW MODE

The review screens allow you to see detailed information about your characters, to equip them with weapons and armour, and to use various skills and abilities. The amount of detail available depends on the level of complexity you have chosen (see 'Making life complicated').

In the top left of the main review screen is the character's portrait, name, archetype and level. Beneath this are areas depicting the character's backpack and items worn or carried. These can be selected, moved and used with the mouse. To the right are bars showing the current level of hunger and thirst, the god worshipped by the character and, beneath that, the character's statistics. In 'Advanced' mode you can also access screens showing the character's skills and magical abilities.



CHARACTER BUILDING

In *Blade of Destiny*, as in all RPGs, to get anywhere you need characters. Due to the unique choice of complexity given by the game, there are four methods by which you can achieve this goal.

METHOD 1: THE DODDLE

Choose 'Novice', then go straight into the game. You are given a balanced party of pre-generated characters, and can start playing immediately. It's that simple.

METHOD 2: THE ADVANCED DODDLE

Choose 'Advanced', then go straight into the game. Again you're given a pre-generated party, and can now spend hours looking at all their statistics and skills. Then start playing.

METHOD 3: THE MILD SWEAT

Choose 'Novice' and then go into character generation. Here you can simply choose the archetype, name and sex of the character or, for the slightly more daring, assign attributes, then do the above. Either way *Blade of Destiny* handles all the skills and magic.

METHOD 4: THE NIGHTMARE

For those brave and foolhardy gamers who've been hardened by years of role-playing experience, this is the only way to go. Choosing 'Advanced' and then character generation throws you straight into the deep end. You have control over virtually every aspect of each character – just generating the six required can be a day's work.

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 20MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 10Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib
Controls: Keyboard, Microsoft Compatible Mouse

PC ZONE score

Large in scale, absorbing to play – but more suited to 'serious' role-players than your average gamer.

78

Price: £39.99 **Out:** Now
Published: US Gold
Telephone: 021 625 3366

TRAVEL MODE

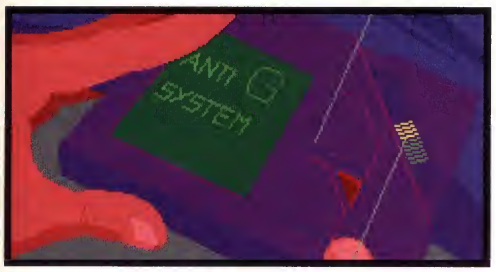
Travelling between towns and cities in *Blade of Destiny* is handled in a unique way. Each town has a various number of signposts. Moving your team into one shows the destinations available from there. Some signposts represent docks, where you can buy passage on ships, but sometimes there are no craft available and other times there will be none going where you want.

Once you've chosen your destination you see a map of Thorwal with your party's progress shown by a line moving across it; think of the *Indiana Jones* movies and you've got the idea. Your party automatically stops and sets up camp each night, and here you have various options such as setting a watch, tending to injuries or looking for food. As you travel, text messages inform you of any events occurring or items of interest, and give you various options to choose from.

PC ZONE RECOMMENDED

Flashback

Duncan MacDonald realised that he could actually squeeze his review of US Gold's *Flashback* into the intro. Like this: *'Flashback:* it's *Prince of Persia* in the future'. So there you go. You now have permission to skip to the final paragraph.



(Top two) Flashback is choc full of animated cut-scenes. The very top starts after Conrad finds a holocube. Next down is from the end of level 1. (Below) To win a spaceship ticket to Earth, Conrad has to appear on a TV game show. If you've seen Arnie's The Running Man, you'll know what to expect.

WHAT CAN I TELL YOU about *Flashback* that you won't have gleaned from the intro? Not a lot basically – and I really wish you'd followed my advice and skipped to the final paragraph. Still, you're here now so I suppose I'm stuck with you. Sorry to sound so rude and all that, but I can't actually think of much more to tell you. Apart from maybe the plot, I suppose. So here it is.

'Conrad Hart, agent with the Galaxia Bureau of Investigation, made a discovery while testing his latest piece of equipment (a Molecular Density Analyser). He found that certain key individuals had a molecular density so high that they couldn't possibly be human. He told all this to his chick, Sonya and they decided to reveal all to the world government. But Sonya then mysteriously disappeared. As did Conrad. As you'll have guessed, they had been kidnapped by "space aliens".

'Conrad was taken to Titan by the "space aliens", and his memory was wiped. But even though he now couldn't remember where he was, who he was and why he was wherever he might possibly be, he still knew one thing: which was he had to escape. And he did. Grabbing a hoverbike, he made a dash for it. In hot pursuit were two "space aliens". They shot Conrad down onto the surface of Titan and left him for dead.'

And this is where the game starts: Conrad regains consciousness and you're in control, discovering things as you go along (seeing as you've lost your memory).

> 'Think of it as being a cross between Total Recall, The Running Man and the TV series "V".'

Rhubarb

So what else? Well, probably the most sensible thing to do – seeing as you should already have the basic idea – is to compare *Flashback* directly with *Prince of Persia*. So I'll just briefly drop into schizo mode and ask myself some questions about the two games:

Has Conrad got as many 'moves' as the Prince in Prince of Persia?
Yes, easily.

Are they the same as the Prince's?
In the main, yes: for instance all the walking, running, jumping and climbing moves could've almost been digitised from *Prince of Persia*.

So what moves are different?
Well, Conrad's got a gun instead of a sword, so obviously there's an animated 'getting his gun out' move: and another when he fires it (spent cartridges shoot out, and there's some recoil). On top of that, he can inch forward with his gun readied for action (SAS style), fire from a crouching position, and also roll along the floor, again with his gun readied for action when he springs back into a crouching position. Oh, I nearly forgot the other new gun move which is used when Conrad's too near his enemies to actually shoot them: i.e., the 'pistol-whip'.

More waffle

Are there any other new moves? Apart from all the stuff with the gun?
Not strictly speaking, but all the so-called 'normal' moves – the ones that are similar to *Prince of Persia* – have been tarted up. For instance, jumping into a wall makes Conrad fall over onto his back, rather than just stop dead. (Unlike the Prince from *Prince of Persia.)* And there are loads of other neat little touches like this.

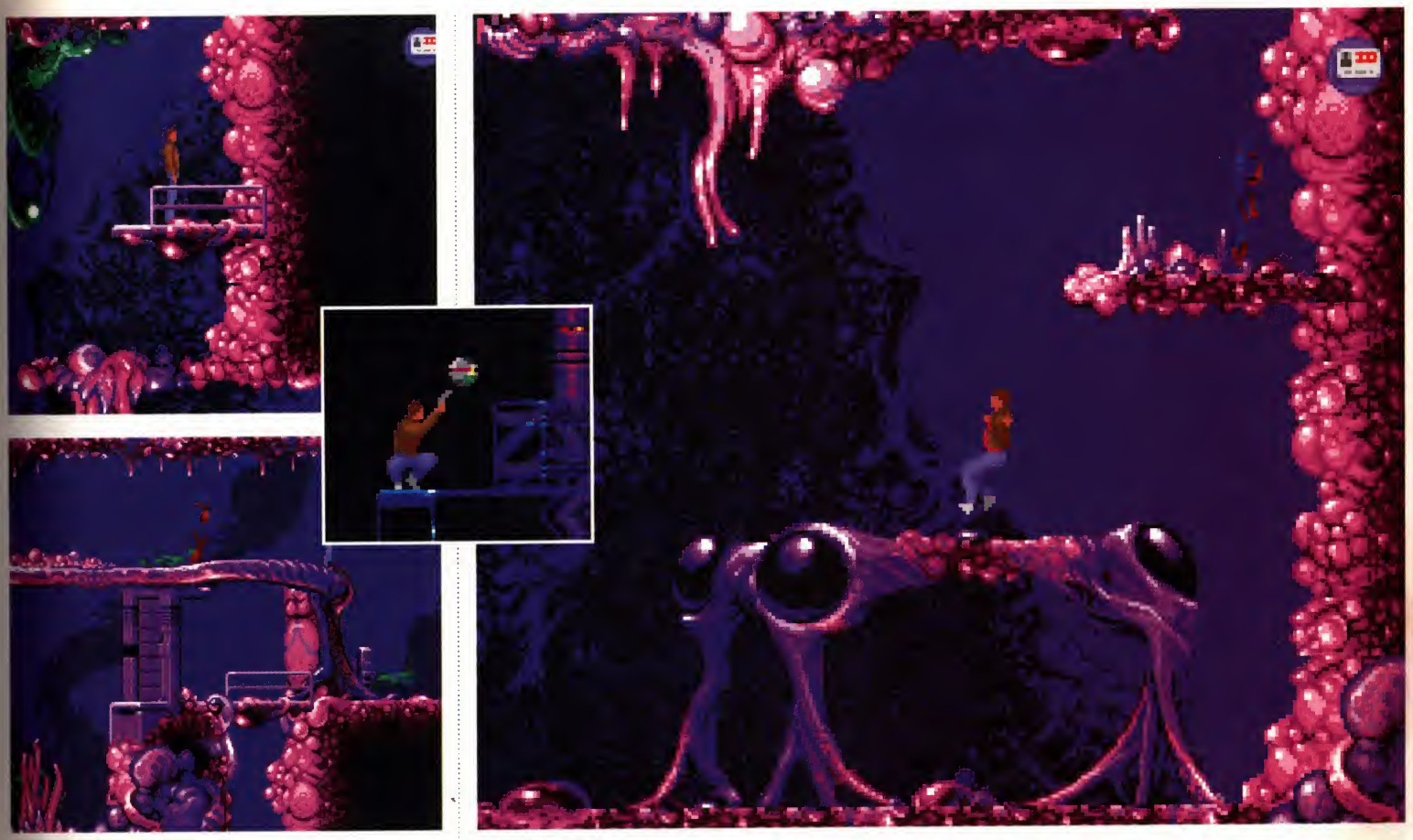
Is the animation speed and detail better or worse than Prince of Persia?
Better. Much better... in fact it's possibly too fast on higher end PCs (although I suppose you can always turn the turbo switch off).

What about the action? The fighty stuff?
There's as much as you want, because *Flashback* contains three difficulty levels: easy, medium and hard. Mind you, easy really is too easy, even for someone with the reactions of a sloth – you could finish the game in one long sitting. Besides, on the hard setting not only do you get more nasties coming at you but you also get different nasties: ones you won't see on the easy setting.

You're suggesting that I play this game on 'hard' then.
In a word, yes.

If I buy it, of course.
Of course.

So the whole thing's set on Titan?
Aaaah. Now the answer to that is no, but if I tell you exactly where Conrad goes after Titan, I'd be giving too much away. I've already spoiled level 1,



(Top left) On the alien's home planet, Conrad suddenly has a brilliant wallpaper idea. (Bottom left) Conrad starts a conversation about textiles with a less than responsive alien. (Above) Conrad displays the consequences of having been born with a mutant Morris Dancing gene. (Inset) A small floating spherical killer robot is about to be 'shut down'. (Below) Conrad springs into the room and lets off a shot at an innocent bystander. (Bottom) Conrad struts his animated stuff.

after all – what with the map and everything. Suffice as to say that *Flashback* is pretty massive, with five totally different locations in all: some of which are very 'clever'.

What do you mean, 'clever'?

Flashback has actually got a plot which unfolds as you progress (far more so than *Prince of Persia)*, and you can (to a limited extent) interact with some of the other characters. To explain why I said 'clever' I'll have to spoil a bit more of the game and tell you that after leaving the jungles of Titan you find yourself in Titan's main city, where there's a hell of a lot to do, heaps of people to talk to and a brilliant continuation of the storyline. To travel around the city, however, you need to use the tube train network. Yup, there's a fully functioning metro. You might be told (for instance) that you have to go to a certain location and apply for a work permit; so down to the subway platform you trot, where (after having studied the route map) you actually wait for a train. There are other clever bits too, but I'll leave them for you to discover should you buy the game.

More rhubarb

Prince of Persia 2 has got loads of 'cut scenes'. Has Flashback?

Yes, and unlike *Prince of Persia 2* they're fully animated. (Manga style.)

What about the control system? Is it horribly nightmarish with an analogue joystick, or what?

You'll very probably opt for the keyboard mode, but even so, the control system in *Flashback* still takes ages to get to grips with. The jumping and leaping parts are simple enough, but the trouble arises when using the gun... the spacebar is used to both draw your weapon and re-holster it, while the shift key is used to fire it. Sounds simple enough in theory, but in practice it's all too easy (especially in panic situations) to draw your gun and re-holster it without having fired a shot. Result? Usually death.

Are there pick-uppable items?

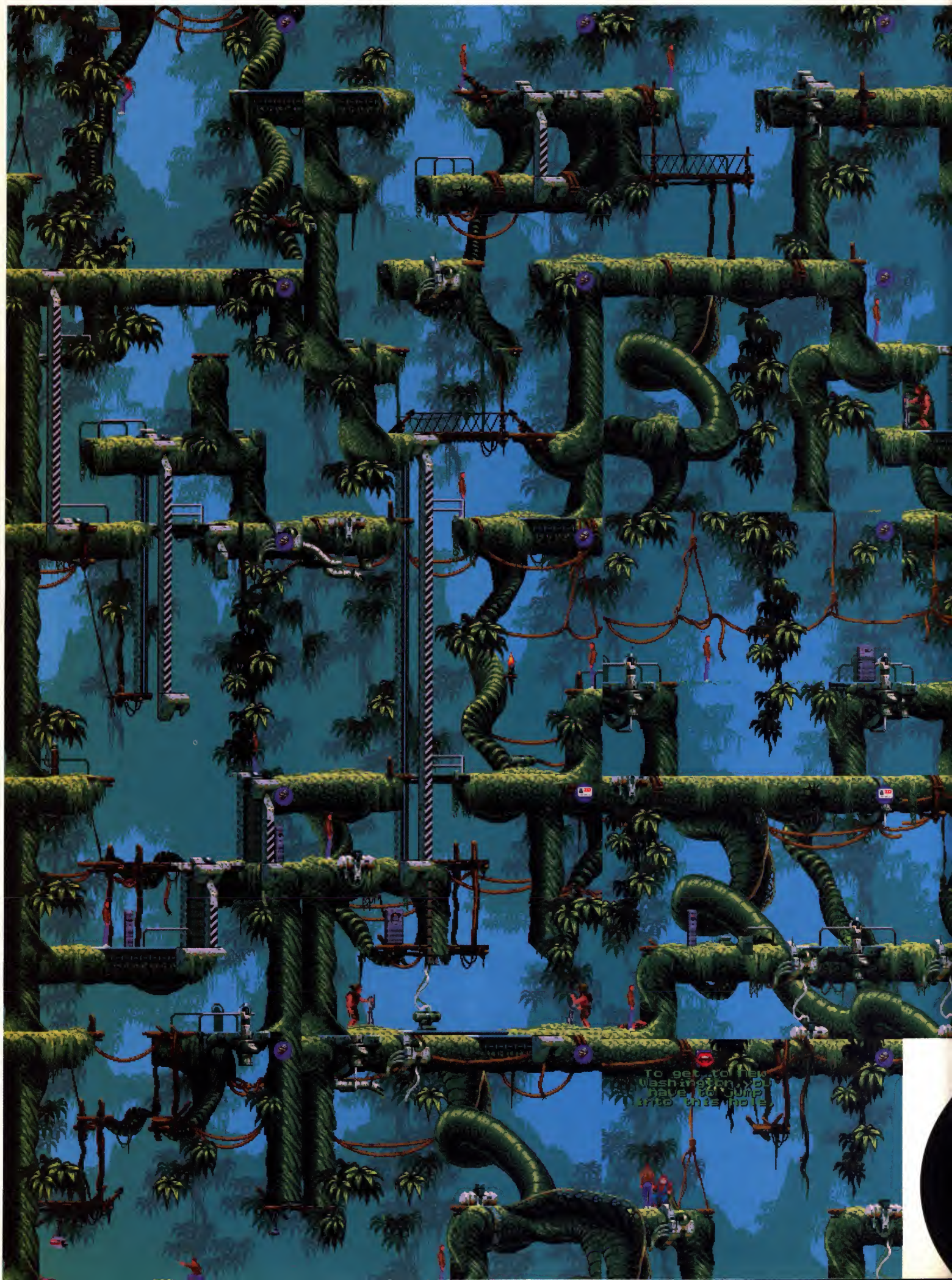
In abundance. Cash, keys, useful bits of hardware and so on. Unlike *Prince of Persia* you have an inventory box (called up with the TAB key). You can select certain items and 'use' them (for instance, 'using' a stone will make Conrad throw it in the direction he's facing... unless he's crouching, in which case he'll simply put it on the ground).

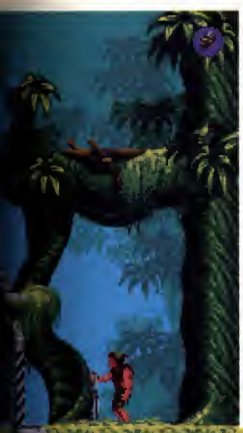
So all in all, Flashback is pretty smart?

Yes. Great graphics, great sound and loads of addictiveness. Move over *Prince of Persia*, basically.

The final paragraph

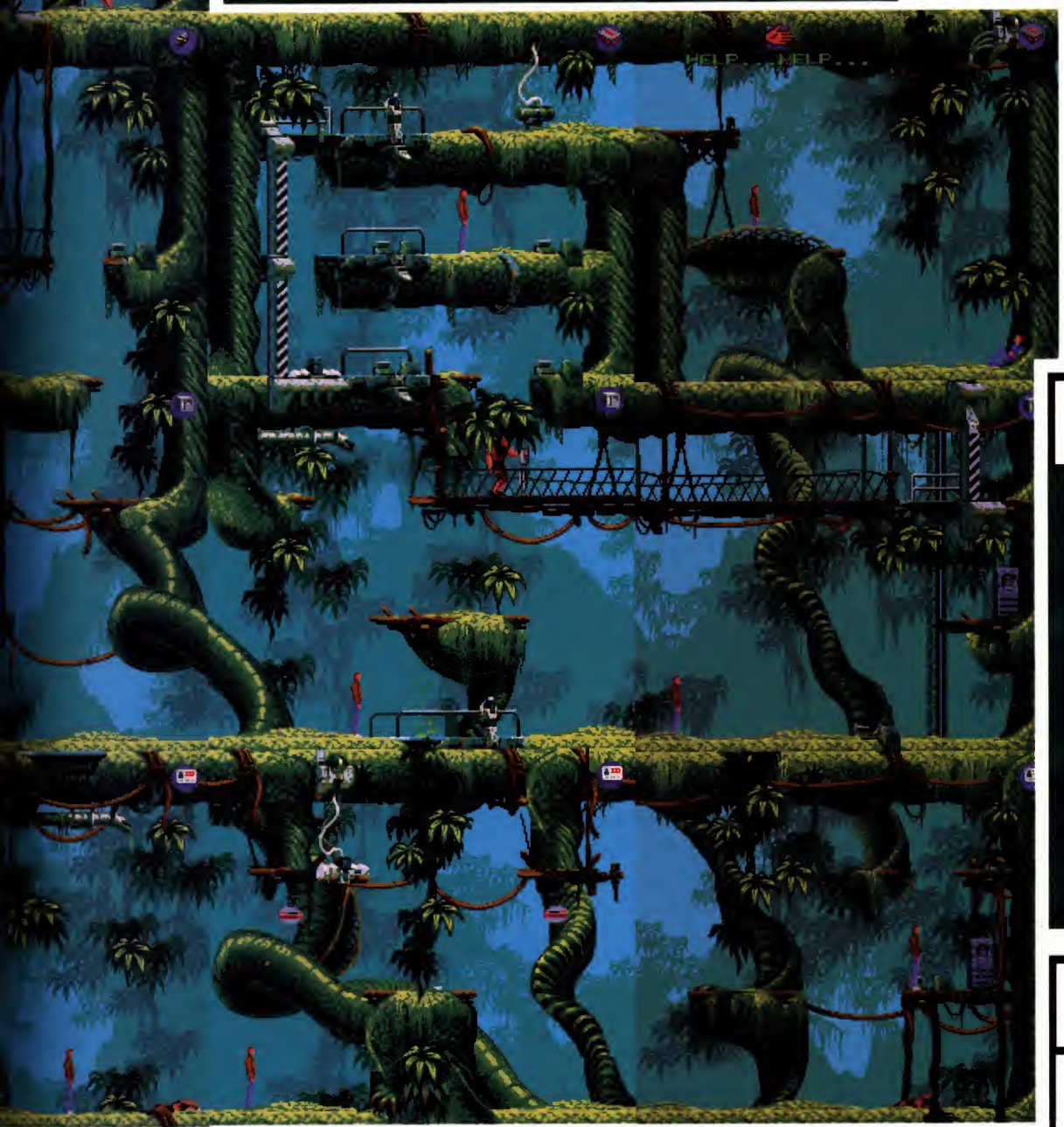
Welcome to the final paragraph (which you can skip if you've come the long route). *Flashback* is just like *Prince of Persia*, but set in the future: think ☞

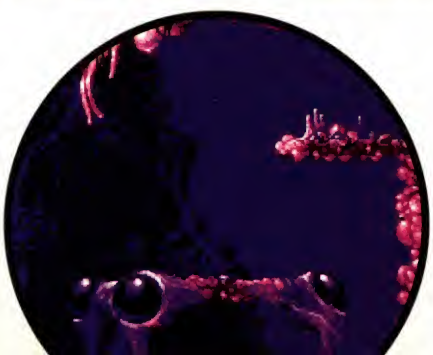

To get to New
Washington, you
have to jump
into this hole.

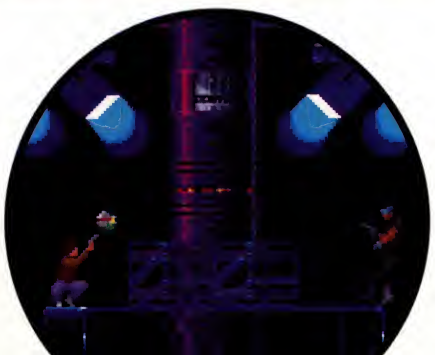


Level 1, Totally Spoiled

Here's the whole of *Flashback*'s first level for you to browse over. Bear in mind, though, that we grabbed many of the screens *after* Conrad's gun battles, meaning that if you want to see exactly where all the nasties are, you're going to have to scour the floors for dead bodies. Something else to bear in mind is the fact that we grabbed the screens while playing on the 'easy' setting: if we'd selected 'hard' then there'd be corpses and blown up machinery lying around all over the shop. On some of the screens you'll spot bits of text. These are the semi-interactive moments – the moments when Conrad and another character actually speak to one another. Scattered around the level are pieces of hardware that Conrad can interact with: energy generators, elevators, switches, pressure pads, save game posts and key or card locks. You'll also find electrified ground and, er, deadly laser cannons.







☞ of it as being a cross between *Total Recall*, *The Running Man* and the TV series *'V'* and you'll be about there. The animation on the main sprite puts the *Prince of Persia* sprite to shame, and the same can be said of the animation of all the other characters in the game. The backdrops and sound are, at certain times, better too. What's more, *Flashback* has much more of a 'plot' than *Prince of Persia:* there's an unfolding storyline, and even interaction with some of the characters you meet along the way, although this is fairly limited. (That is, the ones that aren't trying to kill you: the only interaction you have with them is of the shooting/running away variety). By the way, your character has an inventory box meaning you get the chance to 'use' all the things you find usefully scattered about. The atmosphere in the game is brilliant: it's all very involving, and once you get the nightmarish controls sorted you'll be hooked. *Flashback* is about the same size as *Prince of Persia 2*, but somehow feels much larger (if you're playing on the hardest difficulty setting). To sum up all I can say is that *Flashback* sticks an index finger in the air and shows Bröderbund what they could have done with their recent *Prince of Persia* sequel (but didn't). Z

PC ZONE score

It's *Prince of Persia* in the future (but he's got a gun).

89

Price: £37.99 **Out:** Now
Published: Delphine/US Gold
Telephone: 021 625 3388

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: Not specified
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 8Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA only
Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Roland MT32/LAPC1 and compatibles
Controls: Keyboard, Joystick
Comments: Needs DOS 3.0 or above.

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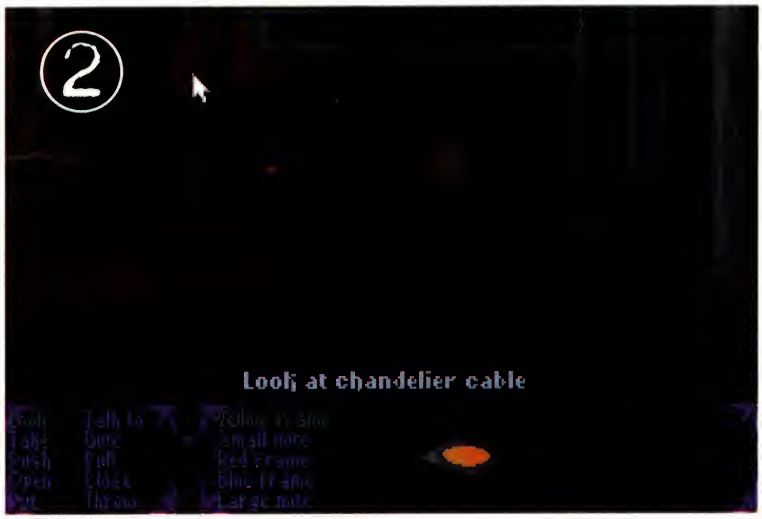
Return of the Phantom

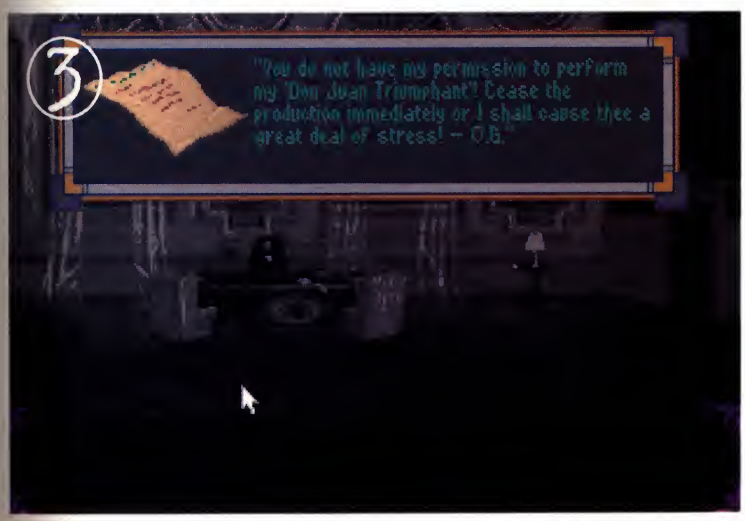
As he's the only person we know who owns a tuxedo and drinks Pimms, we sent the all-singing, all-dancing Andrew Clerkson to the Opera.

EVERYONE KNOWS about the Phantom of the Opera, right? Everyone knows Andrew Lloyd Webber wrote it. Everyone knows that he put his (then) wife Sarah Brightman in a starring role, and that she used to be a foxy chick in fab '70s dance troupe, Pans People. Everyone knows that the Phantom is Michael Crawford. Well this is all wrong. Lloyd Webber didn't write it – a geezer called Gaston Leroux did way back in 1911. Sarah Brightman was never a foxy chick in Pan's People but rather the weasel faced one in the tacky Hot Gossip. And the Phantom's real name is not Michael – it's Erik. Also, just to get things straight, he isn't a slightly deformed character who has had a bad deal from life and is worthy of our sympathy; the real Phantom is a hideously deformed, sadistic lunatic who enjoys murdering and torturing people when he's bored. This is the stuff of Leroux's classic novel, and MicroProse, adding to the current spate of excellent graphic adventures based in Victorian settings, has gone back to the original text to script the story for *Return of the Phantom*.

Return of the Phantom is MicroProse's second outing into the world of the graphic adventure and the game engine and interface is similar to its first, *Rex Nebular*, although much improved. This time MicroProse is appealing to the novice player with a compact, and frankly very easy, game. Those that tremble at the knees at the thought of a hulking RPG, and are a tad scared of the in depth puzzle solving of the classic graphic adventures like *Monkey Island*, should sail through *Phantom of the Opera* blissfully. All of the programmers' efforts have gone into creating a beautifully painted setting and slick animation that allows the story to unfold without too many hiccups; i.e., without getting stuck. ☞

WHO IS THAT MASKED MAN?





Unlike many famous masked people – Batman, Zorro, The Lone Ranger, the Scarlet Pimpernel – the Phantom is not a dashing good guy who dons a facial covering to shroud himself in mystery. Oh no. The Phantom is, by all accounts, a very bad guy who covers his face because he is hideously ugly. Because he is hideously ugly, he is shunned by his peers. Because he is shunned by his peers (and because he can't get a girlfriend) he has become a complete nutter. *PC Zone* tracked down the file notes on the Phantom to see how all his problems came about.

Erik had a traumatic childhood. Neglected by his parents because of an irregular facial disorder, he ran away to the circus and started up a one-man freak show as the 'singing living corpse'. Just as things were starting to take off in his freak show career, Erik was kidnapped by some mad Persians and became a hitman-cum-torturer-cum-architect (an obvious career path really) for the Sultan. Erik furthered his architectural skills building palaces in Constantinople, but his warped mind forced him to fill his buildings with hideous traps, mazes and the like. Owing to his problems in finding a girlfriend in the Middle East, Erik migrated to Paris, rustled up a new CV and picked up a job as an architect on the Paris Opera House. Unfortunately Parisian women were also decidedly uninterested in going out for a drink with a man known as 'the living corpse', and Erik steadily became more and more distraught, finally deciding to hide himself away in the catacombs (which he had fiendishly built) under the Opera House.

With his hormones going wild, Erik could not hold out for long and decided to alleviate his surmounting sex drive by terrorising Opera-going lovies. But one day, in a brief venture out of the sewers, Erik was struck by the beauty of a young singer, Christine Daae. Let's just say that Christine is none too bright and falls for Erik's chat-up line about him being an Angel of Music sent from the heavens to give her singing lessons. Erik thinks it's true love and pretty soon he starts throwing his weight around, bullying the manager of the Opera House to let his girl have a starring role in one of the shows. Alas poor Erik finds out that Christine is in fact knocking off a charming fellow (Raoul) who is a darn sight better looking than him. Unrequited love is a terrible thing so Erik kidnaps Christine and tries to force her to marry him. When he realises that Christine will never snog a man that looks like Davros, he decides to kill her. Luckily, Christine gets the first bright idea of her life, puckers up and kisses him on a gooey bit of his face. This makes Erik go all poncey and nice and he finally lets her and Raoul go. Erik then spends the rest of his miserable life happy in the thought that he is no longer a virgin.

A night out at the Opera 7 July 1993

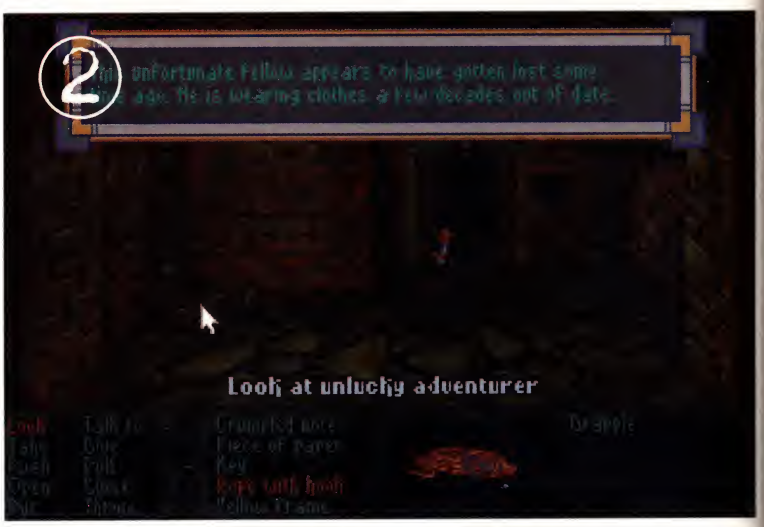
1. Not more than two minutes wandering around the Opera House and the famous detective Raoul Montaud has found the Phantom already. If only Raoul hadn't fallen down that hole he could have apprehended him and been home with a coffee and a croissant by now.

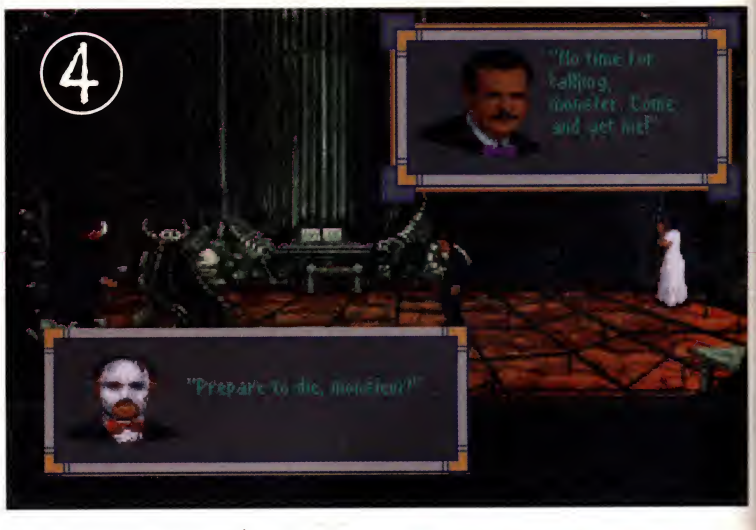
2. Raoul believes he has discovered the reason why the chandelier fell. 'Looks like what you've got here mate is a faulty chandelier cable, innit.'

3. Oh no that's torn it. The Phantom's got in a huff over copyright laws and has threatened to cause a 'great deal of stress'. Agony and death Raoul can deal with but 'a great deal of stress' he can do without. That's scary.

4. In true detective story fashion, no sooner does the investigation start than bodies start dropping like flies all over the place.

Return Of The Phantom





(Top Right) Blimey, the opening night interrupted by an air raid... (Middle Right) Erik hides here sewers no one can find him. (Sewers/so as... Oh please yourselves.) (Bottom Right) Look sharp about it and you might find the key to the puzzle.

IN PERSPECTIVE

None of these games are particularly hard to complete. *Alone in the Dark* is the benchmark in terms of atmosphere, graphics and excitement. *Indiana Jones* has amazing graphics but is just not challenging enough, even for a beginner.

Alone In The Dark

Return Of The Phantom

Indiana Jones

A night out at the Opera 7 July 1881

1. Phantom's up to his old tricks again – stealing all the limelight, hamming it up good and proper, and getting away with the girl.

2. Debonair, fearless and blinded by the love of a good woman, Raoul heads down to the catacombs to flush the blighter out. Stumbling across an unfortunate fellow, he has pity on the poor soul as his fashion sense seems to have deserted him in his old age.

3. Now this looks like a devious switch puzzle, but remember this isn't a devious game at all. So the solution is blindingly obvious. Oh well, great brickwork though.

4. Raoul finally tracks the Phantom down to his lair, and the boys go straight into one: 'You talking to me?' 'Yeah.' 'You want some, eh?' 'Come on then.' 'Yeah?' 'YEAH.'

Nice and easy

Make no mistake, *Phantom of the Opera* is easy for anyone with experience of this type of adventure. The game map is not big, there are not many characters to meet, and there are only a few, mainly simple, puzzles to solve (although the catacombs maze is a particularly difficult rarity). The game can be played in 'novice' or 'challenging' mode, but give or take a few puzzles there's not much difference between them. But then, as it says on the box, this is an introduction to graphic adventures. For the novice player this is a godsend. The chance to get through a game – without having to worry that you didn't ask the correct question to the character in screen one and have consequently been running around your own backside for the past 14 hours – is all the inspiration you need to get the bug. There's no danger of anal circling in *Phantom of the Opera* as most characters will not allow you to lead them away from blurting out all the information you need to complete the game. Once you're hooked you get fed with a little more complexity, and keep going back for more and more puzzles in the belief that you can give it up whenever you want; you have to upgrade your hardware as your habit increases, you lose your job, family, friends, self esteem and eventually you end up on a ropey park bench with a can of Special Brew shouting garbled sentences about expanded memory and CONFIG.SYS at passers by. Ahh, PC games can really screw you up.

A wee bit about the plot

Despite its name, *Return of the Phantom* is not a sequel. The title implies that the Phantom has returned from the past (1881 to be precise) to re-live past glories (like murdering opera-goers) in his old haunting ground. Like any good book, film or, dare I say it, top West End musical it is difficult to say too much about the plot without spoiling it, so all I'll tell you is that it kicks off in 1993 at the Paris Opera House. You are Raoul Montaud, top boy at the Surete, and are weeping your way through a performance of Don Juan Triumphant (an opera written by Erik, the Phantom no less) when mid way into it a bloody great chandelier falls down on the audience killing loads of lovies. Being a fictional detective you are used to this sort of thing happening every time you go out and don't mind snooping around the theatre a bit to investigate the unfortunate accident. In snooping mode, you uncover vital clues that lead you to believe the chandelier carnage was no accident at all. Could it be the ghastly Phantom who terrorised the Opera House over a hundred years earlier? Surely not? The Phantom's bones were found long ago. Just when you are truly flummoxed, screams ring out around the theatre and suddenly you're not quite the man you thought you were — literally. You get a terrible sense of déjà vu and realise that sometimes in life you have to go backwards before you can go forwards. I'm sorry if that's too vague, but the plot is the game in this case and I can't go giving it away.

'The real Phantom is a hideously deformed, sadistic lunatic who enjoys murdering and torturing people when he's bored.'

Sizeable problems

The Opera House is a beautiful place, but unfortunately not a big place, so could have done with just a few more locations to explore. I know the game is meant for beginners to this format, but even the rooms there are just don't have enough in them by way of things that you can pick up and use. Yes, there are a lot of things around that you can investigate and click on to get a description (a great deal of time has gone into finding out what would typically be in an opera house and explaining the objects and what they are used for) but a few more things to use, throw, put, push, pull would have justified the price a little more.

Smooth operator

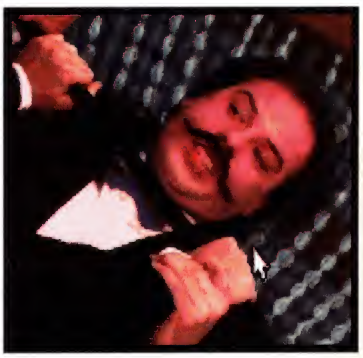
As I've already said, the aim of this game is to tell a hearty horror/mystery story in an atmospheric setting and this is achieved with the use of superb graphics, excellent music and sound effects. The rooms are immaculately detailed and created with an oil painting effect, which is eerie and lends a sense of the grandeur to the surroundings. The sprites move smoothly and are scaled so you disappear to a dot in the background and become a big geezer in the foreground. There are lots of little details in the animation – like your character's Jimmy Hill chinny reckon movement when inactive (à la Sonic) and the way he always bends round to look up the stairs before he goes up just to check nobody is up there – that make *Phantom of the Opera* more like an interactive cartoon.

Sing a song

Set in an Opera House obviously you'd expect some good tunes to accompany your adventure. The musos in the MicroProse back rooms have keyed in some catchy numbers that change often enough to prevent you from bringing up game options and turning the music off after ten seconds. These keep the game trundling along merrily until the digitised screams, deep throated East European 'Ha, ha, ha's, and Psycho-style high-pitched chords come in at critical points, to wrap you up in the suspense of it all.

Each according to his needs

MicroProse set out to produce an eerie tale which would keep you enthralled with smooth scrolling graphics and good music, and which wouldn't let boring old puzzles get in the way of the flow: they have done this marvellously. This game is a perfect introduction if you haven't played graphic adventure games before, especially if you want to get a feel for the state-of-the-art graphics and atmospheric settings – which these games are best at – but don't want to get caught up in a minefield of logical (and often illogical) puzzles. If you are experienced at these games, force a friend to buy it, go over to their house, check the graphics out, get lost in the story for an evening, complete it, go home, lie down and keep your £45.00 for something a bit more challenging tomorrow. Z



Raoul fails his third attempt at 2000 kilos for the French Olympic weightlifting team.

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Controls: Mouse recommended, Keyboard
Comments: Requires MS DOS 5.0 or above

PC ZONE score

Delightfully atmospheric and aimed at beginners. Even so it is still a tad too short and easy to justify the price.

73

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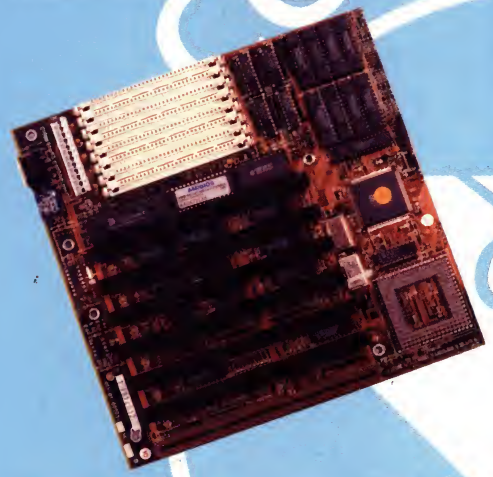

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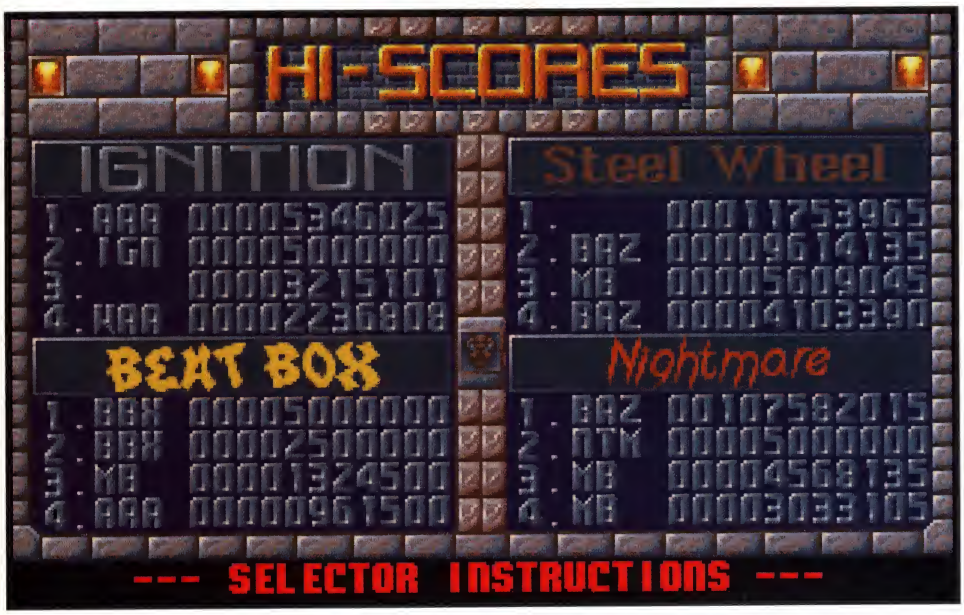
THE TABLES

STEEL WHEELS: Steam ahead.

IGNITION: Shoot into space.

Pinball Dreams



Your ultimate goal - the high score table.

Remember Lucy's Café in Ash Vale? With the big Baly machine? Pinball wizard Mark Burgess does.

ANOTHER GAME TRANSLATED from an arcade in Brighton to a PC near you. This has to be welcomed since it saves you lots of 50 pences and you don't get sneered at by nerdy kids with braces on their teeth. I don't know about you, but I feel conspicuous in an arcade. Anyone over 30 feels as if they're in a socially aware play of the '60s.

Recent software has drawn inspiration from the arcades of the '70s. After *Defenders, Breakout, Tempest* and *Asteroids* (see *Off the Boards*) comes pre-electronic pinball. Imagine all the thrill of playing pinball without people coming over and demanding your dinner money, or old men sidling up to you and offering a bag jelly beans if you touch their willies. Or, of course, the Neanderthal that leans over and says: 'See that "Baz" on the high score? That's me right? Played this table for years. This the first time you played pinball?' And so on.

NIGHTMARE: Frightening complexity.

BEAT-BOX: Hit the charts.

Crazy flipper fingers

Pinball Dreams comes with four tables: Ignition, Steel Wheels, Beat-Box and Nightmare. Ignition is the least complex but the hardest to play. The theme is space, so you have a sun run and warp roll-overs. Next is Steel Wheels which has a railway theme with ticket bonuses and a tunnel. Beat-Box has ramps, tour bonuses and music references, and the last, Nightmare, is the most complex and based around a graveyard. Each table needs particular tactics for success and an entry on that ever elusive high score table.

Controls are simple and naturally the same for all tables. The two shift keys for the flippers and the space bar to tilt. The cursor down arrow fires the ball, 'P' pauses and ESC quits. There is no way to redefine these – a pity, as I would be more comfortable using the enter key for tilt. A pity too, if you're a deaf dumb and blind player who wants to use the home keys.

> 'The program gives you all the noise, the flashing lights and excitement of pinball.'

Anything Amiga do...

Those of you who played *Pinball Dreams* on the Amiga will immediately say: 'What about the graphics? What about the sound?' After all, these are areas in which the PC has tended to dawdle behind other machines. The graphics are in full 256 colours and feature some of the smoothest scrolling I've seen on a PC. Each table is three screens long and the ball canons around without a hitch. How did Spidersoft (who wrote the program) manage that?

The 256 colour mode on a VGA card is mode 13, where only a quarter of the memory is available. This means 64K on a 256K or 128K on a 512K card. As each pinball table needs 200K video memory, the programmers developed a software fix that allowed mode 13 to use the card's full memory. The screen is updated during the vertical blank period so there may be speed problems with early – that is, two years or older – VGA cards.

That's the graphics. The game has good background music and sampled sound effects – mainly from the Amiga version or from the programmers. Playing pinball is like driving a steam train, the noise is half the fun. If you haven't got a sound card don't worry because the sampled sounds can be heard through the PC speaker. More clever programming. The PC speaker responds digitally, so sampled sound cannot be played through it with conventional drivers. The program's driver runs the speaker on and off at a very high (inaudible) frequency so it can respond as an analogue device.

Back to Baz

The program gives you all the noise, the flashing lights and the excitement of pinball. Up to eight people can play, so you don't have to play with yourself, and it's so realistic I replaced the space bar on my keyboard with a mercury switch for a proper tilt function. Is anything missing? Yes, of course; the aforementioned Baz. The arcade guru who knows the machine inside out. Well don't worry because *Pinball Dreams* comes with a manual that gives you tips on playing all the tables. Z

PC ZONE Score

As enjoyable as the real thing, but a bit on the pricey side.

78

Price: £37.99 **Out:** August
Published: 21st Century Entertainment
Telephone: 0253 851 852

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 530K Free RAM
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 20MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 2.5Mb Free
Minimum Graphics: VGA (see text for details)
Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Roland
Controls: Keyboard
Comments: DOS 3.3 or higher

Monopoly

Laurence Scotford takes a nostaglic, weepy-eyed look at the latest computer version of the most famous board game in the world, this one from the new software division of Waddington.

REMEMBER THE good old days before Trivial Pursuit and Pictionary? The days when families would gather round a game of ludo or snakes and ladders. And of course, at Christmas you wouldn't sit glued to the television, you'd sit for hours over the Monopoly board, desperately trying to remember the rules, and more often than not, making them up as you went along.

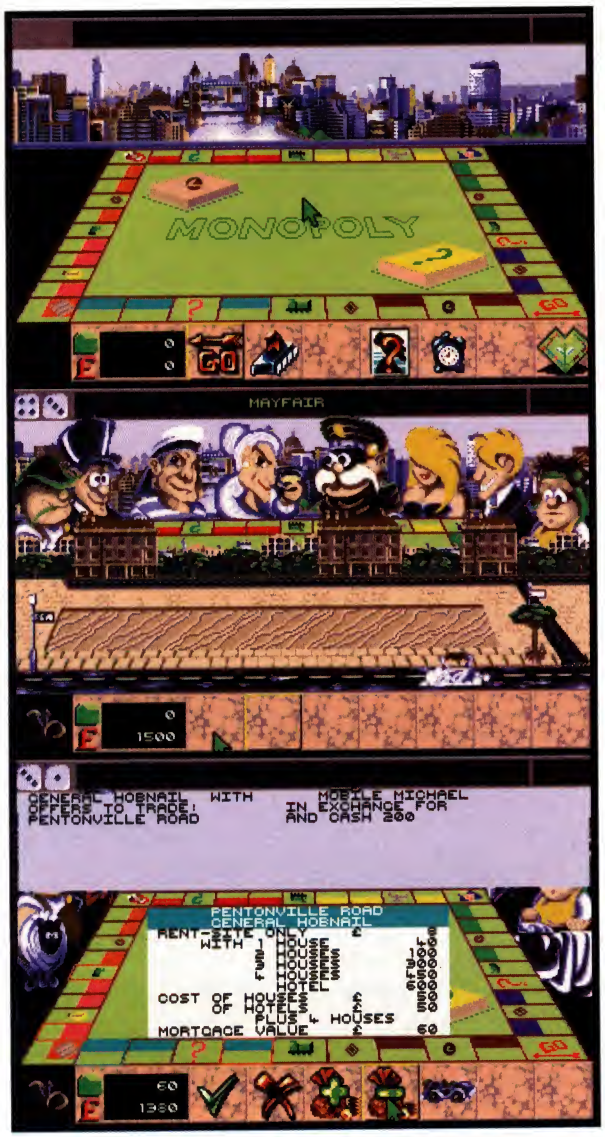
Now you can re-live those lovely golden days again, with a little help from Supervision, the new software arm of John Waddington, the company that responsible for marketing the original board game.

If you are already feeling that disconcerting sense of déjà vu, that's because, given the illicit shareware versions in circulation, there must be upwards of a dozen different versions of the game about. This one, however, is the newest and most official. But is it the best?

The rules and regulations of the board game have been faithfully reproduced, even the ones you never knew about. Did you realise, for instance, that if you have three or more hotels and you don't collect any rent for three consecutive turns, and there are less then four players, then you must forfeit £200 to the bank, but only if you haven't been in jail and played a get out of jail free card in the last two games and your name doesn't begin with X?

The designers have taken the opportunity to provide the player with a lot more than a few computer controlled opponents and a Monopoly set with unloseable pieces. The players are all animated and each has an appropriate sound effect. Every action in the game has been literalised. When you build a house, there are hammering and sawing sounds and a house appears in the appropriate spot. Get into financial trouble and you can send the bulldozers in to knock it all down again. Land on 'Go to Jail' and a police car screeches up, sirens blazing, and takes you off to start your prison sentence. Pass 'Go' and your personal bank account really is credited with £200.

It's great fun, especially since the computer plays quite well, but after the novelty had begun to wear off, I did start longing for a way to switch the animation and sound effects off and have a sensible top-down view of the board, and be able to instantly see who owned what properties rather than have to interrogate them individually with the mouse pointer. Maybe I'm just too much of a traditionalist. Oh for those lovely golden days, and the Monopoly and games of snap and getting sick on Quality Street. Sigh. Z



PC ZONE score

A faithful conversion, which is slightly too flashy for its own good.

75

Price: £34.99 **Out:** Now
Published: Supervision
Telephone: 071 702 9391

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 8086
Minimum Speed: 10MHz
Installation: Optional
Minimum Hard Disk: 1.3Mb
Minimum Graphics: EGA
Sound Cards: Sound Blaster
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick

(Top Left) You always have a 3D view of the board without the names of the squares. It's very pretty, but not too practical.
(Middle Left) When you land on a square, you don't just see your piece being moved, you get an animated view of its arrival against an appropriate backdrop.
(Bottom Left) Once all the property has been bought, the wheeling and dealing begins. You can make offers of property and cash for the locations you really need.

KNOW THY ENEMY

The eight players in Monopoly each has a distinctive style of play. If you want to avoid becoming the latest losing Lloyd's name, you'd better start sussing them out. Here are a few pointers.

Mrs Starch

1 Don't be deceived by her frumpy appearance; Mrs Starch has developed a keen eye for a bargain. Having disarmed you with those yellowed teeth, nicotine stained fingers and wrinkled stockings, she'll belt you one across the ear hole if you don't watch yourself. Always good for a bit of city gossip though.

Mobile Michael

2 The original immature rich git with a filofax. Michael's not smart, he's just got lots of money to waste. So much so, that he bought a ground floor flat in Docklands. Guess who's going to be wading through his lounge in five years time! As if he didn't have troubles enough, he dates...

Miss Trixie

3 She might appear to be an empty headed bimbo, and her recent spread in *Penthouse* would seem to confirm this, but she's making a packet, and she's got poor Michael wrapped round her little finger. She'll drop him like a hot potato once his money's gone though.

General Hobnail

4 This old buffer lost his marbles years ago, so he retired from the army and became a judge. When he's not dabbling in the money market he plays wargames and offers opinions to the press on the state of the world. Most of these amount to: 'People have never had it so good', and 'What this country needs is a damn good war'.

Granny Knot

5 Although her frail old lady act is practiced to perfection, Granny Knot will kick you in the particulars as soon as look at you. Having become increasingly frustrated, when even Harrod's became jittery at selling under the counter furs, she now goes on regular shooting holidays to bag her own.

Bosun Barnacle

6 The man with a girl in every port is now hoping to get property in most of them too. Having been personally responsible for fathering a sizeable chunk of the third world population, he's now having fun and making money by exploiting them all.

Lord Topper

7 A huge contribution to the Tory party from his company's private pension fund secured him his peerage, and now he's in the business of buying up old cemeteries for 15 pence a time, then redeveloping them as blocks of luxury flats for the likes of Mobile Michael and Miss Trixie.

Farmer Barrow

8 He claims that he needed to move into property because the traditional skills of the small farmer are being hampered by environmentalists and do-gooders. Poverty (he's down to his last £3 million) has forced him to use cheap and illegal stocks of DDT on his crops. How sad.

Farmer Barrow's Sheep

9 Although not strictly a player, Farmer Barrow's sheep has been secretly siphoning large sums of its master's money into a Swiss bank account. It plans to use this to stage a coup by domesticated livestock. Currently preparing his manifesto 'Sheep and Cows Prepare for Power'.

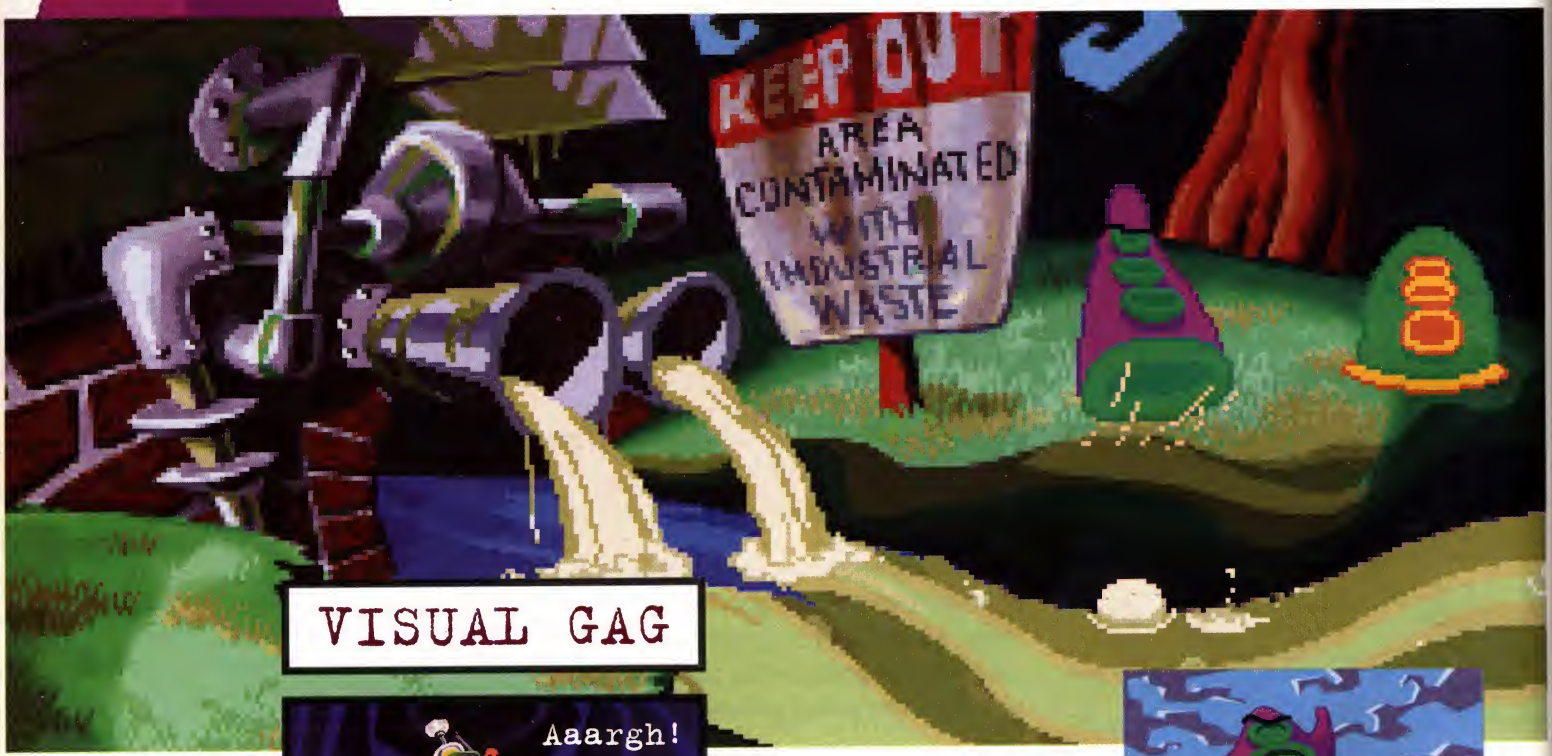
IN PERSPECTIVE

Monopoly

Scrabble (US Gold)

Monopoly Board Game and Friends

MANIAC MANSION 2: DAY OF THE



VISUAL GAG

Here's an example of a funny joke from *Day of the Tentacle*. The time machine has gone wrong. Our hapless trio are sent bulleting through the time continuum vortex.
'Aaargh!'

'Neaarrrghhhhh!'

'Yo man, this is cool.'
(Well it tickled me anyway.)

The Purple Tentacle. What else could I say?

THE PUZZLES

Puzzles are, of course, what make an arcade adventure. Forget this modern day sampled speech, realistic characterisation, and cartoony graphics – if you haven't got a good repertoire of puzzles you may as well not get up in the morning. *Tentacle*'s time travel element, with all this 'flushing' and brain blending paradox shenanigans, adds a new dimension to what would otherwise be C minus' problems. Take this one for instance.

1. **ORANGES ARE NOT THE ONLY FRUIT.** Laverne's dangling in a kumquat tree (whatever that is) somewhere in the future. She can't get free. She's trapped in a nightmare Purple Tentacle populated world. How can we get her free?
2. **THERE ARE CHERRIES TOO.** Enter Hoagie, in civil war time, as his pal Georgie 'Bush' Washington, famed for all that chopping cherry trees and 'I will not tell a lie' stuff. Wait a minute – chopping down trees eh?
3. **AND KUMQUATS.** Washie won't cleave the tree because it's not cherry red. Kumquats are yellow. Ah, but enter Hoagie and his red paint.
4. **OH YES, AND CRANBERRIES.** Voila! L'arbre est tombée. Cutting down the tree in the past pops it out of existence in the future. Laverne is free. God bless America and Grandma Washington's Cranberry and Waffle Pudding and all that.

TENTACLE

MANIAC MANSION I

Secreted somewhere in *Day of the Tentacle*, in all its six year old four-colour glory, is *Maniac Mansion I*, the original, the one and only, the full and complete and playable game. Which is quite handy really, since there are lot of 'gags' and references to it in *Tentacle*. *Maniac Mansion I* is where we first met Ed, Bern, Hoagie and the whole gang in a chunky CGA sort of way. The pics above set the scene.

As the only person in the office who actually uses the word 'Yo' and knows what a 'geek' is, David McCandless was the essential dude to review *Day of the Tentacle*.

LISTEN TO THIS plot carefully. You will have to concentrate. Mad scientist Fred 'Ed' Edison has a lab. He spends a lot of time in it, a-cackling and a-rubbing his hands. he has two pets, Purple Tentacle and Green Tentacle, who look, literally, like the blunt end of an octopus' appendage, suckers and all. Ed's lab secretes a continuous flow of toxic waste into a nearby river, and it is here where all the trouble starts. Purple takes a dram from this eco-unfriendly sludge and – via an incredible radio-active mutation process – sprouts arms, turns evil, and becomes hell-bent on *world domination*. So it's up to Bernard (the computer geek), Hoagie (the heavy metal roadie), and Laverne (the neurotic medical student) to stereotype their way through past, present and future to change history, rectify the damage, and boldly go where *Monkey Islands I* and *II* have pretty much been before.

Outlook

You pick up the story at the point when Bernie and his pals crash Ed's lab to rescue the Tentacle brothers, unbeknownst to you, Purple's gone a bit 'Saddam' in the head. Ed decides to use the Chrono-Johns (Tardis-like toilets) to send this latter day Scooby-Doo gang back to yesterday to turn off the sludge-o-matic machine before the tentacle can take that fateful sip. Unfortunately it all goes a tad wrong. Hoagie is stranded 200 years in the past, jammed between George Washington and Thomas Jefferson with no electricity and only a repertoire of 'dude' speak to find a way back. Laverne's stuck in a kumquat tree in the year 2193 (plus she's neurotic, plus she's a token woman) while Bernie stays more or less where he is (being a computer geek), trying to raise two million dollars to buy a new diamond so that the time machine can be repaired.

Oh, problems, problems, problems. But there are two plus points. In between healthy quips about American *'culture'*, our hapless trio can: (a) 'flush' objects back and forth through time to aid each other; and (b) since they are in the same location plus or minus 200 years they can alter the past and present to change the future – or alter just the past to change the present, or, for that matter, make a subtle alteration to the present to drastically shift the future, or, indeed, send something back from the future to change the past and thereby warp the present (it's all very complicated).

The graphics

The graphics in *Day of the Tentacle* can be neatly encapsulated in the word 'snazzy'. The past, present and future 'zones' are all depicted in a cartoony 'altered perspective': sort of a cross between Hanna Barbara and Salvador Dali. It works very well; all manner of sloping walls, angular circles, weird shadowing, and mind-altering colour palettes create a likely setting for the ridiculous plot. The cartoony characters, superimposed across the background, have no problem, as you might ☞

1

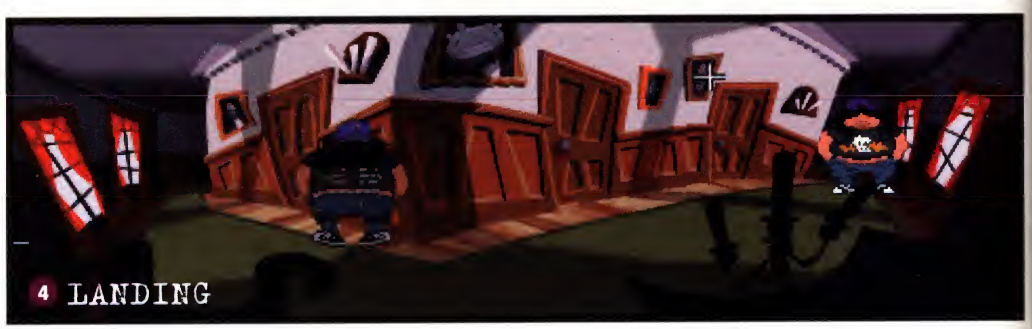
2

3

4

MADHOUSE

1. **THE FOYER** Timedate: The Present. Problem: a dime stuck to a piece of gum stuck to the floor. Cryptic solution: Make sure no *crow bars* the way *(Oh that was a great clue. Well done. Ed).*
2. **THE MAIN ROOM** Here, in the past, Horlock, Jefferson and George Wash are stumped in conceiving the Constitution of the USA.
3. **THE LAB** Here's where all the trouble started – Mad Ed Edison's mad lab.
4. **THE LANDING** What can you say about a landing?
5. **THE OFFICE** Stardate: The Present. Problem: don't know the combination of the safe behind the picture. Cryptic solution: Decaf the prof, push the nurse, and tape the rest.
6. **THE KITCHEN** Ye olde kitchen, resplendent with authentic pots and pans and a water pump. A bit of soap and water can do wonders on Sunday afternoons (very cryptic clue).
7. **GREEN TENTACLE'S ROOM** This is where Purple tentacle's brother resides. Purple's world domination plans are on the wall, along with a bowling ball and a videotape.
8. **THE ART ROOM** Here are the past relatives of Ed, Jed and Ned Edison, aspiring sculptures and an easy way of mocking pretentious art types. They say that swapping hammers can cause useful distractions in nursing circles.
9. **THE BEDROOM** Ed's mad son resides here, along with his pet hamster and stamp album. The computer in the corner allows you to play *Maniac Mansion I* (god help you).



IN PERSPECTIVE

Monkey Island

Monkey Island 2

Indiana Jonesand the Fate of Atlantis

Day of the Tentacle

Maniac Mansion

Here Hoagie 'amusingly' tries to get Thomas Jefferson to part with his log.

MORE SCUMM

A la the *Monkey Islands, Day of the Tentacle* uses the much-hyped SCUMM mouse-verb system. Pioneered in the aged Maniac Mansion and then exploited thoroughly in classic arcade adventures such as *Zak McKracken, Fate of Atlantis* and – I'll say again – *Monkey Island,* SCUMM stands for Script Utility Creator Maniac Mansion. In a SCUMM-y game the bottom of the screen, you'll find, is packed with adventure verbs such as Pick up, Open and Push etc. Alongside that is your inventory, scrollable and eminently pick-up/open/pushable. Above that is the playing area, packed with still more things to pick-up, open and push. Using these three 'hot-spots', you construct tidy little sentences, such as: open the bottle of tequila with your hairy hands. A brief click later and your character enacts said sentence. The SCUMM system is big on interaction. The Talk verb brings up a list of small talk delicacies, which, together with the idiosyncratic replies from the characters, build up into a conversational extravaganza.

☞ have expected, in 'going in' and 'coming out' of the 3D screens. Everything is rounded and polished by amusing cut scenes – time travel sequences, meanwhile scenes, and rotating news flashes on the Purple Tentacle's progress – to give an overall not-a-computer-game-more-of-an-interactive-episode-of-Scooby-Doo feel. The bizarro look goes well with the bizarro humour, which is *well...*

The humour

I've got a little problem with *Day of the Tentacle*'s humour. In the first place, it's very 'studenty'. Now, I'm a prime candidate for student humour. I've made as many bum-tit-willy 'jokes' as the next Home Economics student. *Day of the Tentacle* is rife with student humour, but it's *American* student humour. Which is a whole different kettle of tits, as my bum will tell you. Try this example. Bernard tries to buy a rather expensive jewel over the phone:

Bernard: Uh, I'd like to buy the diamond please.
Person: That will be two million dollars please. Have you any major credit cards?
Bernard: No, but I've got an ATM card.
Person: <click.
Bernard: *(pausing for full effect)* Well, I thought it would be useful when I got it.

Huh? Wa-? Do what? Come again? Couple this with a few Declaration of Independence one liners, Bill and Ted style 'bogus' chit-chat, and a running joke about a log, and you've got a pretty alienating (and unfunny) tone to the whole game. The *Monkey Islands* skirted this trap by having a fairly universal theme and setting, namely piracy and er, Monkey Island. *Day of the Tentacle*, being set in America and with you playing American students, ends up being more of a tongue-in-cheek edutainment affair than a full-scale gag-a-rama for we poor Brits.

The sound, too, has been maximised for full comedy effect. Or at least it would have been if the digitised speech hadn't been delivered in awful Eldorado 'Markous I am being riding a horse' type deadpan. The long cartoony intro is packed with samples but 'Come over here so I can punch you' is said in the same way as 'I'd like a croissant please', and 'Oh no. You've freed the Purple Tentacle' is said as tonelessly as 'That's a nice bowling ball'. The music, however, is suitably jocular, and the odd sprinkling of sound effects add a certain something.

The verdict

Overall, however, the result is not as good as *Monkey Island* or *Fate Of Atlantis*. Although *Day of the Tentacle* beats both hands down on graphic style, it falls down with its Stars'n'Stripes-o-meter rating, its 'in-jokey' humour, and its limited range of locations. If you want to pause (quite poncily) for a second and talk characterisation, Bernie, Hoagie, and Laverne, being stereotypes, are all a bit dislikeable and you don't actually care what they do or what happens to them. The dialogue suffers as a result, and all the quips and amusing character quirks which made you grin (faintly) and endear you to the characters in *Monkey Island,* just annoy and alienate you in *Day of the Tentacle.* But saying that, the graphics and clever-clever puzzles will keep you going for a good few hours, and with a sound card, you'll be having all your friends saying 'cor'. But, you may feel, as I did, that you're sitting-in on an episode of a new Transatlantic sit-com, except you've missed the first six episodes and you've no idea who's who or what's what and, apart from the odd-one liner and interesting plot turn, you're completely bewildered. Z

THE SUNDRY TIMES
Rash of Cow Tipping Baffles Police
Triangular Man Spotted at Scene

The Purple Tentacle's plans have begun.

The guys in glorious Blackhead-o-Zoom.

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K, 2Mb recommended
Minimum Processor: 286, 386 recommended
Minimum Speed: 12MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 17Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA only
Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Roland
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

PC ZONE score

Lovely graphics, good music, quite challenging but a bit too American for my roast beef and dumplings taste buds.

85

Price: £42.99 (CD ROM: £45.99)
Out: Now
Published: LucasFilm/US Gold
Telephone: 021 625 3388

IN SEARCH OF AN ORIGINAL FEATURE

It wouldn't be fair to write off *Prehistorik 2* as a complete no hoper in the originality stakes, because I did manage to find two elements I haven't come across before. Each time a creature touches you, you loose one of your three energy hearts. If you then kill that creature, it explodes in a shower of bones. Pick up six bones and you get a heart back. So, if you're quick it is possible to undo the damage that has been done. Secondly, the game incorporates something that Titus calls 'Multi-directional scrolling' which basically means that the part of the background scrolls in the opposite direction to the rest of it. Smart huh?

Prehistorik 2

Having recently been revealed as the last surviving member of homo neanderthalensis, Laurence Scotford was the ideal man (ape?) to review the latest Palaeolithic platform perambulation from Titus – once we'd managed to coax him out from under his desk with a bunch of bananas that is.

'If you're that keen on owning it, you'll probably not have long to wait before it's re-released for a tenner or so.'

BACK IN THE GOOD old Pleistocene days there were no such things as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, largely because the world itself was a huge big one. Considering that the residents of the day had so much fine and unspoiled countryside around them, you have to wonder why they didn't come up with the idea of ploughing it all up and building supermarkets over it. That way they wouldn't have had to spend time and energy running around and clubbing the rest of the biosphere to death simply to get something to eat.

This lack of foresight has left Prehistorik in a tricky position. His arch enemy Gorilla-Rap has grabbed his grub, and the only way he can avoid having to break out the Pot Noodle, is to grab his trusty club (all right, less of that, if you don't mind), and head out into the big wide sssi to rape the land and plunder its resources, while doing away with whatever wildlife happens to be in the way (the royal family would be proud of him).

'Why oh why oh why oh why,' I wrote to Anne Robinson only the other day, 'are we still having to put up with the same tired old ideas from purveyors of platform games? I refer to the recently released game *Prehistorik 2*, from the French software publisher, Titus. It adds absolutely nothing new or worthwhile to the genre. I wouldn't mind, but Titus seem to produce little but platform games these days and all of them are very much alike except for a change of scenery, music and sprites. All right, so this game is aimed at kids, but then so are *Zool*, *Robocod* and *Magic Pockets*, and they are all far superior. We software supporters deserve better than this, so come on Titus, give us something new for a change.

Yours hopefully,

Disappointed of London.

P.S. Please could my letter not be read by some poncey actor with a patronising voice. Thank you.'

So there you have it. What more can I possibly say, except that this should have been a budget release, and if you're that keen on owning it, you'll probably not have long to wait before it's re-released for a tenner or so. Meanwhile I'm going to crawl back under my desk and finish my bananas. PZ

The enemies

1 When platform games were in their infancy (we're talking *Manic Miner* here), it was fine to have every enemy in the game wander mindlessly back and forth as they do in *Prehistorik 2*. That's not the case anymore. Play a game like *Gods* and you'll discover just what a difference intelligent enemies make. They will find ways of attacking you so that it is more difficult for you to strike back, rather than simply dashing at you in a suicide run.

The bonuses

2 In *Prehistorik 2*, bonuses are just lying around to be collected. Not very exciting is it? Try something like *Magic Pockets*, in which normal bonuses are complemented by a rather clever gold and silver star system that can be manipulated to give you the big bonuses that you need.

Moving platforms

3 Wow, *Prehistorik 2* has platforms that move back and forth or collapse. Nice, but it's been done before and things have moved on. Take a look at *Robocod* for example which also features springy platforms, hidden passages, steep slopes and plenty more.

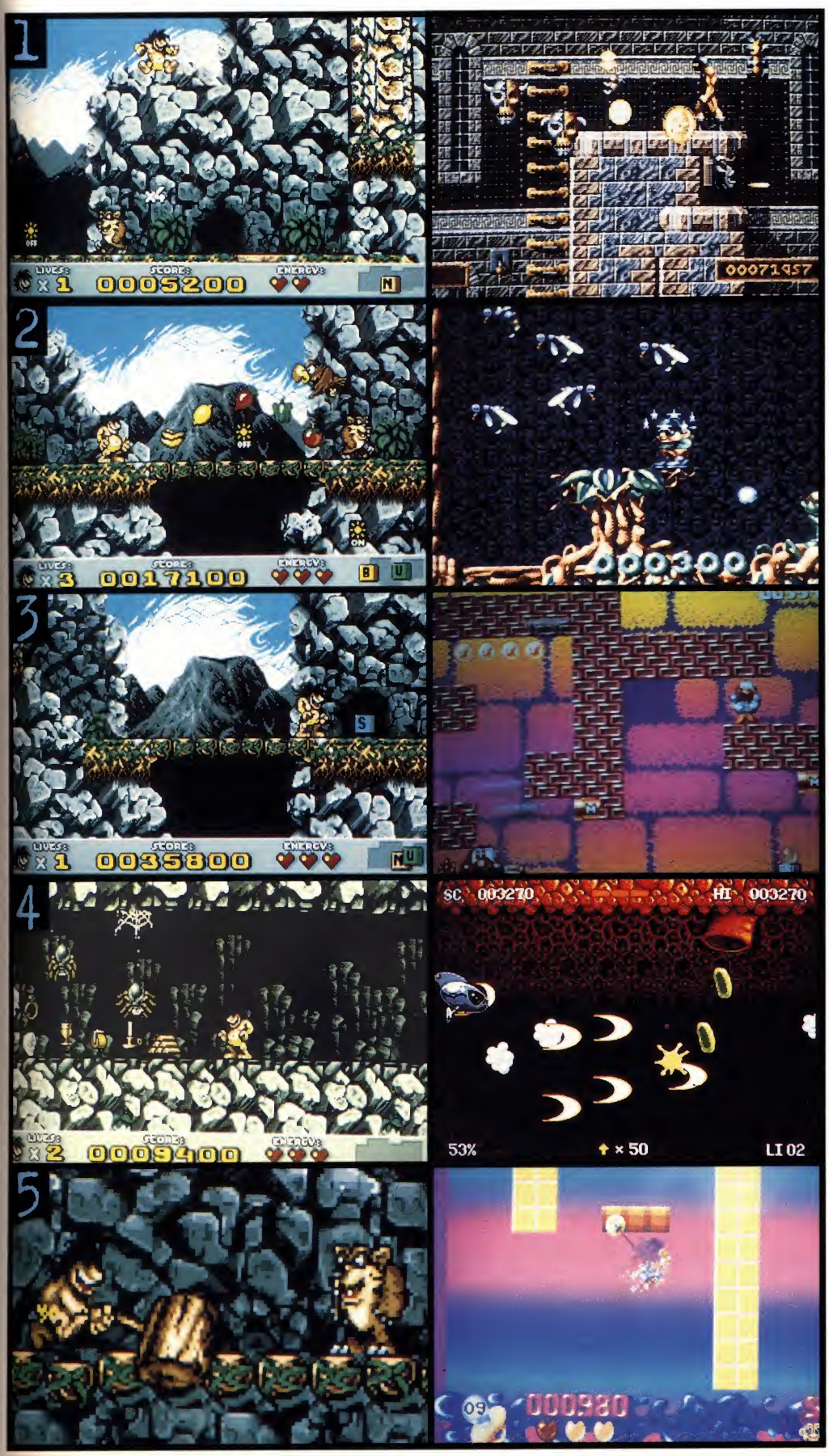
Secret rooms

4 There are secret areas to be found in *Prehistorik 2*, but they generally consist of a single room with a selection of bonuses. There are other places throughout the game that, if hit, will shower bonuses on you. Unfortunately finding these is so boring it's not worth the effort. *Zool* on the other hand, has a variety of secret areas, All found in very different ways. One of them is even a complete shoot 'em-up level!

Extra weapons

5 As you progress through *Prehistorik 2*, you do get better weapons, but while they get more powerful they don't really do anything different. In *Trolls* you can find a yo-yo which is not only used as a weapon, it enables you to swing from platforms too.

A FIELD GUIDE TO GAME CLICHÉS



PC ZONE score

A very average platform game, which competes with some budget titles but little else.

50

Price: £29.99 **Out:** Late August
Published: Titus
Telephone: 071 700 2119

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 512K
Minimum Processor: 8086
Minimum Speed: 10MHz
Installation: Optional
Minimum Hard Disk: 1100K
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Sound Cards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

IN PERSPECTIVE

Magic Pockets
Prehistorik 2
Robocod
Trolls
Zool

FIELDS OF GLORY

Andrew Wright finds out just how British farmers feel as he faces a mob of screaming Frenchmen in the latest Napoleonic wargame sim from MicroProse.

PC ZONE RECOMMENDED

THERE'S BEEN NO shortage of computer wargames whose gameplay and graphics have failed dismally to live up to the bright promise of the packaging. You know the ones I mean: the heroic (or murderous) looking soldiers in crisp red and blue uniforms slogging it out with bayonet and sword on the front of the box turn out to be brown blobs on a lurid green battlefield with the occasional burp from the speaker as it tries to simulate the explosion of a 12 pounder shell. *Fields of Glory* promises to be something quite different.

The *Fields of Glory* box is equally impressive, of course, but it's what's inside that counts. As wargames go, it's not entirely original – others have tried to animate miniature soldiers that march, fight and die on the computerised tabletop, but this one knocks them all into the proverbial Napoleonic style cocked hat.

Opening the box reveals a glossy manual running to over a hundred pages and the mandatory technical supplement containing the 'It didn't seem important at the time but since the hotlines are getting jammed we'd better put it somewhere' bits. Add to that the really last minute stuff that's cobbled together in README files and you're often left wondering just how up to date the manuals are.

I almost completely forgot to mention the five high density disks (they were useful for getting the game up and running) and the A3 glossy map. Clearly someone decided that as all wargames come with maps, this one had better have one too. No matter that it doesn't tell you anything that you couldn't achieve by simply zooming out now and again.

Fields of Glory requires a 386 PC or better, running MS DOS 5.0 or 6.0 and it isn't guaranteed to work with disk compression software. As it takes up 15 megabytes of hard disk space when fully installed (11 without the intro), it isn't exactly going to go unnoticed. It isn't fussy about memory, and I had no problems at all running it with my normal Windows set-up with various assorted device drivers for things like the CD ROM, Sound Blaster and Stacker drives.

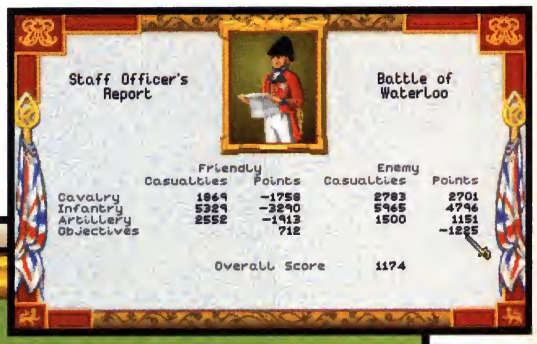
Diplomacy by other means

With the intro sequence out of the way, you can opt to play the overall commander of either the French or Allied forces in any one of six scenarios at five difficulty levels. You can alter the disposition of your troops before the battle to a limited extent: they can only be placed in the rear and, as this involves losing ground, it isn't really to be recommended.

There are two fictional battles to cut your teeth on and four major ones for the experts. The real life ones are ☞

(Above) Once the animated intro is finished, it's off to war we go.
(Right) The first thing to do is select which of the six battle scenarios to fight.

(Right) The database provides a well-researched order of battle for the historical scenarios and keeps you up to date with losses and the status of each unit. (Far Right) You can press 'R' at any time to get an idea of how you're doing. Remember though, you might be ahead on points but if you're in a tactically weak position, you'll still come unstuck.



THE BATTLE OF NIVELLES

Nivelles is a simple practice battle with only a handful of units but it's still a challenge.

Let battle commence. This four mile tactical display shows units in the centre of the Waterloo battlefield.

The eight mile strategic map shows all the units in the battle as flags but you can still issue orders.

FORMATION DANCING

The military tactics of the time seem like insanity to us now but they represented the only way to wage war and stand a chance of success. In the same way, *Fields of Glory* requires you to have some idea of how to fight with a Napoleonic army if you are going to win against the computer.

Infantry were kept in tight formation because otherwise they'd have run away but some better quality troops could and did fight loosely in open or 'skirmish' order. The main formations are the column, for quicker movement and shock in close combat, or the line, which meant every man could fire his musket. In the game you have no control over musketry as the effective range was very short and units tend to fire at will or when attacked. The square was the universal defence against cavalry which is why one sound tactic is to threaten a charge then mop up squares with your artillery or infantry.

Cavalry don't have the same power that they have in films. Launch a heavy cavalry brigade at a formed infantry unit and the chances are they'll make little impression. They should be used to threaten enemy infantry, forcing them into square, or to ride down disordered and routing troops at which they're extremely effective. Light cavalry are relatively weak and should be used with care.

Artillery are the hardest arm to get to grips with as each unit has a different range depending on its guns. Find out the range of the guns and place them as close to the enemy as you dare, making sure they're screened by cavalry or protected by infantry if possible. Used properly, artillery can be the most effective weapon on the battlefield.

REVIEW Fields Of Glory

Le Custer's last stand? This French formation advanced a little too far – the officer on the black horse and a handful of men are all that are left with infantry, cavalry and guns on all sides.

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb RAM
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 11Mb (15Mb with intro)
Minimum Graphics: VGA/MCGA
Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Roland or PC speaker
Controls: Mouse essential
Comments: Needs MS DOS 5.0 or higher. Expect ponderous performance on slower 386 PCs.

PC ZONE score

A brilliant simulation that puts even the most reluctant wargamer right into the thick of it. Only its speed prevents it from being awarded Classic status.

89

Price: £44.99 **Out:** Now
Published: MicroProse
Telephone: 0666 504326

☞ Quatre Bras, Ligny, Wavre and Waterloo itself, all of which were fought in the same area between 16 and 18 June, 1815, and all of which are based on minutely detailed research.

Nivelles, the first 'battle', is a good place to start with a French army attacking an Allied one across a valley. It helps to play both sides to get the feel of how to attack and how to defend. It even becomes a good, challenging game in itself and as it takes under an hour or so to reach a conclusion, I found myself playing this one quite often.

The disposition of the Allied troops leaves something to be desired but then the Prince of Orange was in command. He can't help his name, I suppose, but history still regards him as a prat; the best thing that happened to him on the day of Waterloo was that he got shot.

Officers and gentlemen

The command and control system is flexible enough to interest all sorts of players, from those who want to launch their cavalry at anything in range to the thinking players who want as much realism as possible. You can send orders through subordinates (taking longer to get through) or take over from brigade commanders and stick your oar in wherever you feel the urge.

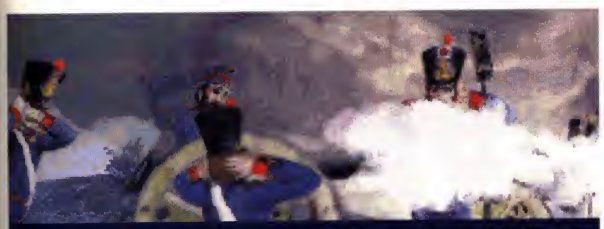
Clicking on a unit brings up a dialogue showing the unit's name or number, the current formation it's in, what it's doing and its general status. Possible formations include line, column, square, skirmish or mixed line/column (French only) while the orders can be assault, hold, deploy (move) or withdraw. Status can be formed (under full control), disordered (much less use) or routed (no use at all). Cavalry can only be in line or column and artillery have an additional limbered/unlimbered status.

Generally speaking, you can have considerable control over your units or let the divisional and subordinate commanders take care of things. Occasionally a brigade of cavalry can take you by surprise and charge the enemy, and sometimes less reliable troops will suddenly turn and flee, but on the whole your army does what is expected.

To obtain information on how a unit is faring requires you to use the database which is instantly accessible at any point of the battle. It provides a detailed breakdown of the command structure and information on the remaining number of troops or guns in a unit as well as their capability in one of four categories, militia, line, light and guard.

Vision of hell

The 256 colour graphics are excellent and the sounds through a decent soundcard lift it even further. Each time you order a cavalry charge, for example, you're treated to stirring bugle calls and the thunder of hooves. Units can be observed at one of three zoom levels and although it only appears as a flag at the overview or strategic level, in close-up mode the individual figures move, present arms and volley in thrilling animation. Even the gun crews run industriously around their guns before standing to attention and firing. Each figure has its own shadow and actions are marked by a pile of corpses or broken guns wherever they occur; something which adds considerably to the atmosphere of the game and becomes a good measure of how far through some units are.



INTO THE THICK OF IT

Playing the full Waterloo game takes many hours, but here's part of an opening skirmish in the centre of the Allied line where a desperate battle has broken out for control over La Haye Saint, the farm that Wellington himself believed to be the key to the whole battle.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Far and away the best attempt yet at putting miniatures on the computer screen, with great graphics and sound.

Fields of Glory

Waterloo/Borodino/Austerlitz

Great Napoleonic Battles

Charge of the Light Brigade

'In close-up mode the individual figures move, present arms and volley in thrilling animation.'

1 The French are trying desperately to hold onto the farm and the computer opponent pushes up a fresh infantry column to relieve the hard pressed defenders. The pile of dead horses and men shows just how hard the fighting has been! In an attempt to prevent the reinforcements getting through, I've turned my nearby artillery onto the infantry. Notice old 'Nosey' nonchalantly sitting on his horse under the tree. Heaven knows what he would think of all this.

2 Luckily I just happened to have a brigade of cavalry sitting around kicking their heels, so a rather rash charge is ordered. The French, meanwhile, have hastily formed square.

3 The timely appearance of a few French lancers seems to have scared off the cavalry (you can't seem to get decent heavies these days) but it comes too late to save the infantry. Now they're in a tightly packed square, the artillery rips them to bits.

4 Just to make sure, I've ordered up the infantry, marching steadily forward in line, and hoping to deliver a couple of telling volleys. Fortunately the Frenchies have seen the writing on the wall and they're off.

This minor skirmish is only a small part of a very complex battle. Experienced wargamers will see that, although I've decimated a French infantry brigade and improved my chances of clearing the others out of La Haye Sainte, another attacking column has appeared, heading for the ridge where the artillery are placed (bottom left). I might yet pay the price for wasting all my artillery firepower on a minor target.

C'est magnifique, mais...

Fields of Glory isn't the most difficult opponent I've come across, even at the top level, but it does take a different approach to each scenario every time using built-in artificial intelligence rather than standard opening moves. If you attack or even threaten an infantry column with cavalry, it will form square and if you leave your guns too long in the face of an infantry or cavalry attack, they'll route for safety, whether you want them to or not. Computer controlled units can do daft things too and while there are occasions when units of different sides are completely mixed up in totally unrealistic situations, it doesn't detract from the game.

The controls do lack a certain responsiveness, especially in the bigger scenarios and even on a decent 486. It is doing a lot of behind the scenes work, of course, but occasionally it can require several clicks before the game responds. Scrolling, too, is very slow and I'm tempted to say don't run it on a slow 386 but then that wouldn't stop me since it's a brilliant game whatever minor criticisms I might have about the ponderous controls.

Fields of Glory doesn't have to be a perfect opponent. To enjoy a good wargame it's enough that you play an opponent that acts and reacts in a realistic way. *Fields of Glory* will provide weeks of entertainment for battle scarred veterans and interested newcomers alike. Let's hope for a few add-ons and scenario disks for this one – it's a real winner. PZ

A marginal victory is better than no victory I suppose, unless you happen to one of the tens of thousands of dead or wounded.

Caesar's Palace

FOR WINDOWS

Mark Burgess narrows his eyes and says: 'That ain't the hand I dealt you, stranger.'

WHEN THE EDITOR gave me *Caesar's Palace for Windows* I thought: at last, the Mafia meets *A-Train*. Perhaps I'd get the chance to play one of those legendary figures like 'Bugsy' Siegel who changed Las Vegas from a sleepy railway junction in 1931 to the monument to western civilisation it is today.

Alas, no. This is a gambling game, of which there is a fair number already – especially for Windows. *Caesar's Palace* has the gimmick that you wander round the casino, dropping by 16 individual games. You can bet or you can watch or you can play against three computer players of differing skill and recklessness. It's a good idea to watch them for a while before you put your chips on the table. Or else you can make them watch you lose your pot.

It's an unnerving experience to play poker against these faceless opponents. In games of bluff you rely on other people's expressions. The best card games here are those when all the players are against the house, rather than each other. The program doesn't cheat, and the payouts from the slot machines seem, for want of a better word, fair. Is this like the real world? I mean, when the FBI raided Caesar's Palace in 1970 they found one million dollars in cash that had been skimmed off the takings for the mob.

Ol' blue eyes

There's no bar, and blue eyes isn't singing in the corner. Some authenticity has been sacrificed here. For a start, it doesn't hurt. I don't mean that when you win you can make it to the car without being rolled by the owner's friends. The essence of gambling is *risk*. Unless you're gambling something you don't want to lose, there's little point. In this game you can give yourself as much money as you like and bet what you like on whichever game takes your fancy. If you lose, just give yourself more money. This is *not* realistic.

If unlimited money takes the thrill out of gambling, it also robs winning of its savour. Why be excited about winning $500 when you could have just given it to yourself in the first place? I got lucky at roulette, clearing two grand. But I couldn't spend it. No honey-skinned blonde hooker sat on my lap and stuck her tongue in my ear or anything. I'm not sure how Virgin are going to get round this.

(Above) Video blackjack and I win. So there.
(Below) Getting wiped out in poker (it happens). Where's the hint feature?

PC ZONE score

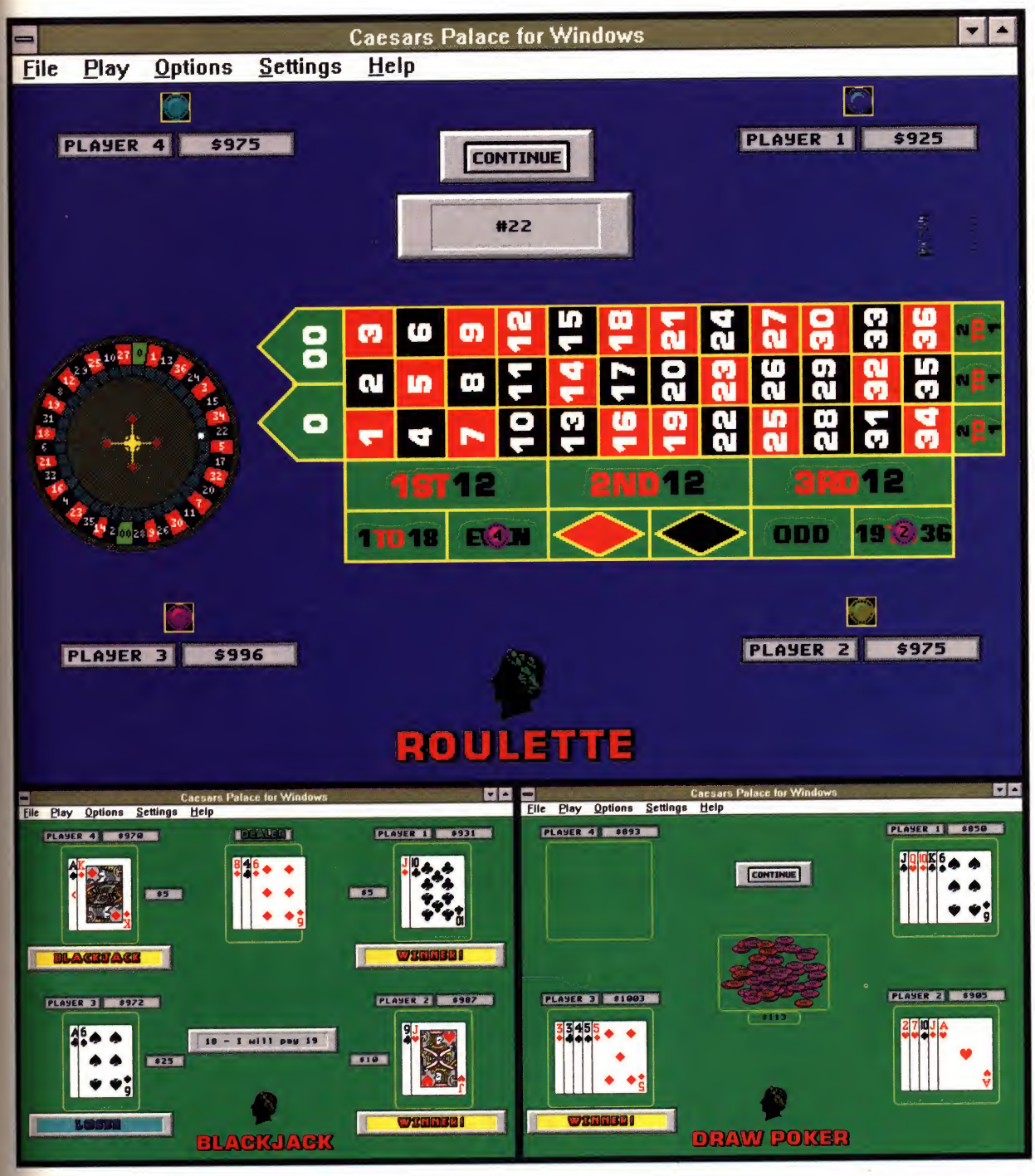
A good compilation, unnervingly addictive.

65

Price: £35.99 **Out:** July
Published: Virgin Games
Telephone: 081 960 2255

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 4.5Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Sound Cards: None
Controls: Keyboard and mouse – mouse recommended
Comments: Needs Windows 3.1



'No honey-skinned blonde hooker sat on my lap and stuck her tongue in my ear...'

(Top) Get broken on the wheel in roulette.
(Far left) Cautious betting in blackjack (I'm player 1).
(Left) Draw poker – computer player 3 (Lucky Luciano) scoops the pot.

Okay, so the games won't jeopardise your house, car or marriage. So what are they like to play? There are 16 of them including four poker games, seven types of slot machine, baccarat, roulette and craps. Some of these are further sub-divided so that you can play for a minimum stake of $2.00, $5.00, $25.00 or $100.00. All of the games play easily with the mouse.

The help file gives a good and concise introduction to the rules and strategies for them all and you can call it up at any time. As I said, you can start with as much money as you like and add to it at any time. You can alter the attributes of the other players on a scale of one (Mug Punter) to four (Diamond Jim Brady). You can change the amount you bet, the number of packs and the odds.

As usual in software, many of the terms are American. Blackjack, for instance, is pontoon except that you don't get anything for a five-card trick. (I was outraged at this, and demanded to see the manager). You also say 'stand' instead of 'stick' and 'hit' instead of 'twist'. And you can't buy cards. Other games are home grown. Keno is the infamous 'numbers'; a game of pure luck and lousy odds. The slot machine version has a choice of up to ten two-digit numbers out of 80. The real thing has any three digit number and odds of 1,000 : 1 (and pays 600 : 1).

I come to praise Caesar

In spite of everything I've said about the gambling side of things, I found the games pretty addictive. Even with pretend money I still doubled up when on a losing streak and kept on playing just one more game to recoup my loses. This is quite obviously a game for punters like me who shouldn't be allowed out of the house.

Now, there are many Windows shareware games that cover the same ground as *Caesar's Palace* – I can think of three poker games, roulette games, keno and three versions of blackjack. There is even one called *Las Vegas* which has blackjack, video poker, baccarat, five card draw and Pai Gow poker in the registered version. *Caesar's Palace* wins (ho, ho) by being a good integrated package. It takes up a fair amount of disk space (4.2Mb). The backgrounds are .BMP files so you can alter them to your taste with *Paintbrush*. When you lose you can write FIX in big letters over the roulette table. ZZ

MY MUMMY SAID

1. Never eat at a place called Mother's.
2. Never play poker with a man called Doc.
3. And never, ever, no matter what else you do, go to bed with someone whose troubles are worse than your own.

COMPETITION

A Sound Blaster CD16 Discovery Pack WORTH OVER £600.

In our special Reader's Survey

TO MAKE PC ZONE better than ever, we need to know exactly who you are and what you want. We want to know what you love, like or hate about *PC Zone* in its current form. We want to sit down in the pub with you and, over a couple of (large) drinks, chat about life the universe and *PC Zone*. We want you to tell us your hopes, your fears and exactly what happened with you and that hockey player in the fifth year. Unfortunately we haven't the time (or the livers for that matter) to go out to the pub 40,000 times in a month (though God knows we try), so instead it's time for a Reader's Survey. By answering the questions and vfilling in the form on the next two pages and sending it to us you can help us make *PC Zone* the magazine that you want. More importantly you'll be in with the chance of winning an excessively smart Multimedia upgrade kit from Westpoint Creative.

The prize

Is it time you dragged your PC, screaming and kicking into the future? Of course it is. In which case you can't do better than this impressive Sound Blaster CD16 Discovery Pack which combines the Sound Blaster 16 with the Creative CD ROM Drive.

The Creative CD ROM is compatible with multisession kodak photo CD and CD ROM XA, and has automatic double speed capabilities for faster data transfer. The drive also has a digital output socket so that when Nimbus start distributing CDs with two hour videos on them you'll be up and ready to play them.

As well as all this, the CD16 Kit comes with Pro Digital Speakers, a microphone and a range of smart CD ROM software including a Multimedia Encyclopaedia, Kodak Photo CD Access Software, *Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe* and the truly fab *Monkey Island*.

A prize well worth winning.

The catch

To be in with a chance of winning one of these fabulous Sound Blaster CD16 Discovery Packs all you need to do is fill in the Reader's Survey opposite, answer the special competition question, then tear out (or photocopy) the page and send both of them to:

Reader's Survey,
PC Zone,
Dennis Publishing,
19 Bolsover Street,
London, W1P 7HJ.

The closing date is September 17 and the usual competition rules apply.

Readers Survey

1. HOW OLD ARE YOU?
- a) Under 15 ☐
- b) 15 – 19 ☐
- c) 20 – 24 ☐
- d) 25 – 34 ☐
- e) 35 – 44 ☐
- f) 45 – 54 ☐
- g) 55+ ☐

2. WHAT SEX ARE YOU?
- a) Male ☐
- b) Female ☐

3. DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN?
- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐

4. IF YES HOW OLD ARE THEY?
(tick as many as applicable)
- a) 0 – 5 ☐
- b) 5 – 12 ☐
- c) 12 – 16 ☐

5. WHAT IS YOUR JOB STATUS?
- a) Employed ☐
- b) Self Employed ☐
- c) Student ☐
- d) Retired ☐
- e) Unemployed ☐
- f) Other ☐

6. WHAT IS YOUR INCOME?
- a) Less than £10,000 ☐
- b) £10,000 – £14,000 ☐
- c) £15,000 – £19,000 ☐
- d) £20,000 – £29,000 ☐
- e) In excess of £30,000 ☐

7. APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENTAGE OF TIME SPENT ON YOUR PC IS TAKEN UP WITH PLAYING GAMES?
- a) 100% ☐
- b) 75% ☐
- c) 50% ☐
- d) 25% or less ☐

8. WHAT TYPE OF PC DO YOU USE?

	home	work
a) XT	☐	☐
b) 286 AT	☐	☐
c) 386 SX	☐	☐
d) 386 DX	☐	☐
e) 486 SX	☐	☐
f) 486 DX	☐	☐
g) 486 DX/2	☐	☐

h) Other

9. WHICH MONITOR DO YOU USE?
- a) EGA ☐
- b) VGA ☐
- c) SVGA ☐

10. WHAT SIZE IS YOUR HARD DISK?
- a) 40Mb or less ☐
- b) 80Mb or less ☐
- c) 120Mb or less ☐
- d) More than 120Mb ☐

11. HOW MUCH TOTAL MEMORY DO YOU HAVE?
- a) 640K or less ☐
- b) 1Mb ☐
- c) 2 – 4Mb ☐
- d) More than 4Mb ☐

12. WHICH DISK DRIVES HAVE YOU GOT IN YOUR COMPUTER?
- a) 5.25 low density ☐
- b) 5.25 high density ☐
- c) 3.5 low density ☐
- d) 3.5 high density ☐
- e) CD ROM drive ☐

13. ARE YOU GOING TO REPLACE YOUR COMPUTER OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?
- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐
- c) Not sure ☐

14. ARE YOU GOING TO UPGRADE YOUR COMPUTER OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?
- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐
- c) Not sure ☐

15. DO YOU HAVE A CD ROM DRIVE?
- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐
- c) No, but I intend to buy one ☐

16. HAVE YOU A JOYSTICK?
- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐
- c) No, but I intend to buy one ☐

17. DO YOU HAVE A MODEM?
- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐
- c) No, but I intend to buy one ☐

18. HOW MUCH DO YOU INTEND TO SPEND ON HARDWARE OVER THE NEXT YEAR?
- a) Nothing ☐
- b) £0 – £300 ☐
- c) £301 – £600 ☐
- d) £601 – £1000 ☐
- e) £1000 – £2,000 ☐
- f) More than £2000 ☐

19. ON AVERAGE HOW MUCH DO YOU SPEND ON PC GAMES IN 3 MONTHS?
- a) Up to £50 ☐
- b) Between £50 and £100 ☐
- c) Between £100 and £150 ☐
- d) Between £150 and £200 ☐

20. WHAT ELSE DO YOU USE YOUR PC FOR?
- a) Education ☐
- b) Business ☐
- c) Design ☐

21. WHAT TYPES OF GAME DO YOU PLAY?

	home	work
a) Simulations	☐	☐
b) Arcade Games	☐	☐
c) RPGs	☐	☐
d) Graphic Adventures	☐	☐
e) Strategy	☐	☐
f) Sport	☐	☐

22. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING MOST INFLUENCES YOUR DECISION TO BUY A GAME?
- a) Subject matter ☐
- b) Packaging ☐
- c) Review in *PC Zone* ☐
- d) Reviews in other computer magazines ☐
- e) Word of mouth ☐

23. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING MAGAZINES DO YOU READ ON A REGULAR BASIS?
- a) PC Format ☐
- b) PC Home ☐
- c) PC Review ☐
- d) Computer Buyer ☐
- e) Computer Shopper ☐
- f) PCW ☐
- g) Windows Magazine ☐
- h) PC Plus ☐
- i) PC Direct ☐
- j) What PC ☐
- k) PC Magazine ☐

24. DO YOU BUY *PC ZONE*
- a) On subscription? ☐
- b) Every month? ☐
- c) Most months? ☐
- d) Very occasionally? ☐

COMPETITION

25. ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5 HOW DO THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS AFFECT YOUR DECISION TO BUY *PC ZONE*? (1 LITTLE OR NO INFLUENCE, 5 VERY INFLUENTIAL)

a) Contents of cover disk ☐
b) Cover image ☐
c) Review/preview content ☐
d) Features ☐
e) Competitions ☐
f) Tips ☐
g) Buyer's Guide ☐

26. HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS OF *PC ZONE* ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 10? (10 IS EXCELLENT, 1 IS ABYSMAL).

a) News ☐
b) Blueprints (Previews) ☐
c) Cover disk ☐
d) Features ☐
e) Troubleshooter (Tips) ☐
f) Reviews ☐
g) Bits & PCs (Technical questions and answers) ☐
h) Off The Boards (Shareware section) ☐
I) Wordprocessor (Letters) ☐
J) Buyers Guide ☐
K) Mr Cursor ☐

27. HOW WOULD YOU RATE *PC ZONE* ALONGSIDE

	better	same	worse
PC Format?	☐	☐	☐
PC Home?	☐	☐	☐
PC Review?	☐	☐	☐

28. WHICH WOULD YOU PREFER *PC ZONE* TO CARRY?

a) One high density disk ☐
b) Two low density disks ☐
c) One low density disk and a book ☐

NB A high density disk has the same capacity as two low density.

29. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS MOST TRULY REFLECTS YOUR ATTITUDE TO *PC ZONE*

a) I want it to concentrate solely on PC games reviews and previews ☐
b) I'd like to see more features on games related hardware such as CD ROM and Soundcards ☐
c) I would like it to be more technical ☐
d) I love you just the way you are ☐
e) I'd like to see less humour ☐
f) I'd like to see some features on non games related hardware or software ☐

30. WOULD YOU PREFER *PC ZONE* TO REVIEW?

a) Fewer games in more depth ☐
b) More games in less depth ☐

31. HOW MANY OTHER PEOPLE READ YOUR COPY OF *PC ZONE*?

a) 1 ☐
b) 2 ☐
c) 3 ☐
d) 4 ☐
e) More than 4 ☐

32. IF YOU ARE A SUBSCRIBER TO *PC ZONE*, ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE SERVICE YOU ARE GETTING?

a) Yes, very satisfied ☐
b) Reasonably satisfied ☐
c) Dissatisfied ☐
d) Very dissatisfied ☐

33. IF YOU BUY *PC ZONE*, DO YOU EVER HAVE TROUBLE GETTING HOLD OF AN ISSUE?

a) Never ☐
b) Occasionally ☐
c) Frequently ☐

34. IN YOUR OPINION DO REVIEWS IN *PC ZONE* TEND TO BE

a) Overly critical ☐
b) Overly generous ☐
c) Just about right ☐

35. WOULD YOU PREFER COVER DISKS TO CONTAIN

a) As many items of shareware as you can cram on? ☐
b) One substantial playable demo? ☐
c) A smaller playable demo and some items of shareware? ☐
d) One substantial piece of shareware? ☐

36 IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE US TO INVESTIGATE/FEATURE IN *PC ZONE*?

37 PLEASE TELL US ONE WAY WE COULD IMPROVE THE MAG FOR YOU?

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Space Legends

Wing Commander

THIS IS WHAT 3D shoot 'em-ups looked like before *X-Wing*. A classy product, slickly programmed by Chris Roberts. The actual plot is irrelevant – you fly various missions and kill aliens while not shooting your wingmen (or women). Good to unwind to.

Elite Plus

NOT SO MUCH A game as a legend. The original *Elite* showed what was possible on an 8-bit 48K personal computer. *Elite Plus* was the same game with filled graphics rather than wire frame and a few tweaks here and there. While everyone is still waiting for *Elite 2*, catch up with a piece of history. It's a strategy game where you must trade and fight your way up the ladder. Do this the safe way and stay on the right side of the law, or become a pirate bold. Still unsurpassed in sheer depth of gameplay. Your Cobra awaits.

Megatraveller 1

AFTER THE CLASSIC space shoot 'em-up and the classic space strategy game comes... the classic space RPG. If you like RPGs you've probably played *Megatraveller* already. It starts with you and your cronies sitting in the bar. A harassed woman bursts in. This is the glamorous Lenaria. She just has time to hand you some items and money and, as she begins to tell you of a great conspiracy, guards burst in. Leaving her to death or worse, you and your chums set out on a great adventure. If you haven't played *Megatraveller* before, it's a basic introduction to the genre. The character generation is involved (although you can use defaults) and the space combat sequences are in real time (that is, slow). The general opinion when *Megatraveller* first came out was that it was a complicated program which never lived up to its promise. It now looks badly dated too. *MB*

You'll like at least two out of three

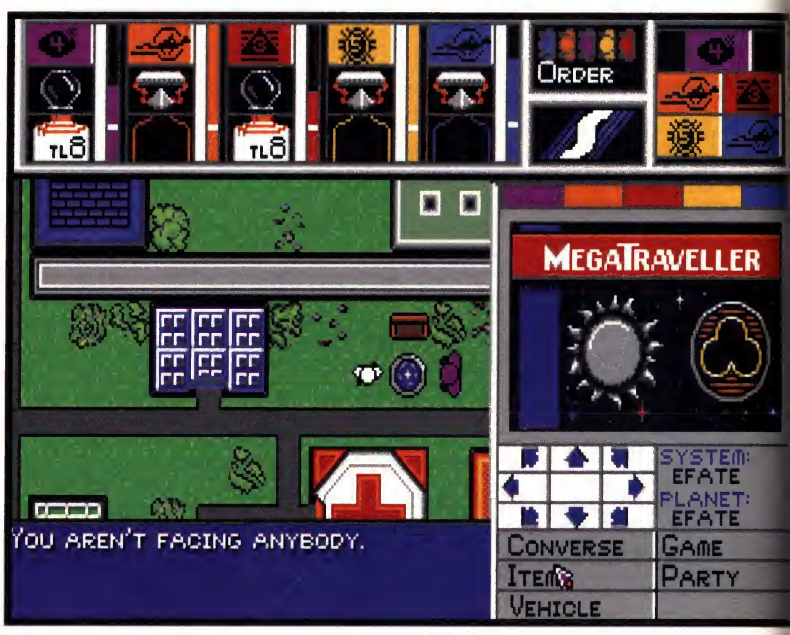
SCORE **75**

Specs **Minimum Memory:** 640K Free RAM **Minimum Processor:** 286 **Minimum Speed:** 12MHz **Installation:** Essential **Minimum Hard Disk Space:** 7Mb Free **Minimum Graphics:** EGA (Elite, Wing Commander) CGA (Megatraveller 1) **Sound Cards:** Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Roland, PC speaker **Controls:** Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick

Price: £34.99 **Out:** Now **Publisher:** Empire **Telephone:** 081 343 7337

Seat of the pants mayhem in Wing Commander

A Fer-de-lance on yout tail in Elite, the legend in its own lifetime.

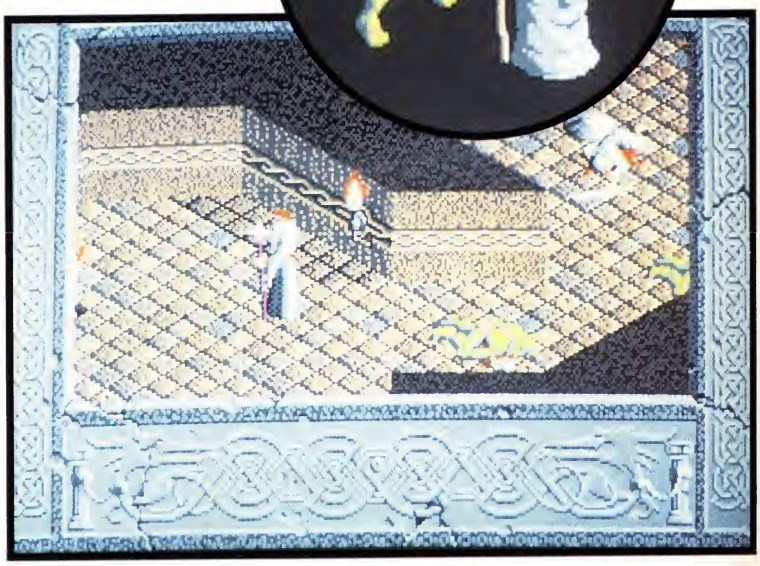


This means you can't talk to the man in white. Put him in hospital.

Once again our reviewers bravely face a host of budget games to find out whether you should spend your beer money on them... or not, as the case may be.

Remember what role playing games used to be like? That's Megatraveller that is.

Make some life-long friends in algae-scummed environs of The Immortal.



The Immortal

IMMORTALITY DOES things to your head. Firstly, you've got a lot of time on your hands, so you build yourself a huge sprawling eight-levelled isometric dungeon. You design it cunningly so there's all manner of secret passages, traps, magic potions, and horribly deep pits, in-between rooms, caverns and tunnels. Then you pack it full of monsters (trolls, demons, and all their goblin ilk) and sit back, listen to the radio, and wait for some poor deluded mage's apprentice to come in and attempt to kill you.

You are (wide-eyed surprise) that mage. Following the distant sounds of Necromancer FM, you trek through the eminently mappable subterrania, doing your wizard stuff: mixing spells, interacting with fountains and regularly taking on the monsters. Combat is a little strange. On encountering a 'bast', a close-up screen appears, with you and your 'pal' facing each other like mirror-images. A furious beat 'em-up style fight sequence follows, with little energy bars going up and down like pistons. He who waggles most wins.

The Summoning did this sort of game better, if a hundred percent more long winded. It had a clever mouse-driven interface which made movement and real-time combat much more approachable. *The Immortal* falls down in this respect with cursor keys and close-up combat, but its early '90s design and one location one problem style play stands up well. Don't be put off by the deadly EGA spell which had been cast on the graphics. The 16 colours are used to acceptable effect. On the whole, a worthwhile 'medium-classic' buy for RPGers. *DM*

At least four Sunday afternoons' play we reckon

SCORE **70**

specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 12MHz **Installation:** Essential
Minimum Hard Disk Space: 1Mb **Minimum Graphics:** EGA
Sound Cards Supported: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Roland
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Price: £14.99 **Out:** Now **Publisher:** Hit Squad (Ocean) **Telephone:** 061 832 6633

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PCZ 9/93

Mig-29: Fulcrum

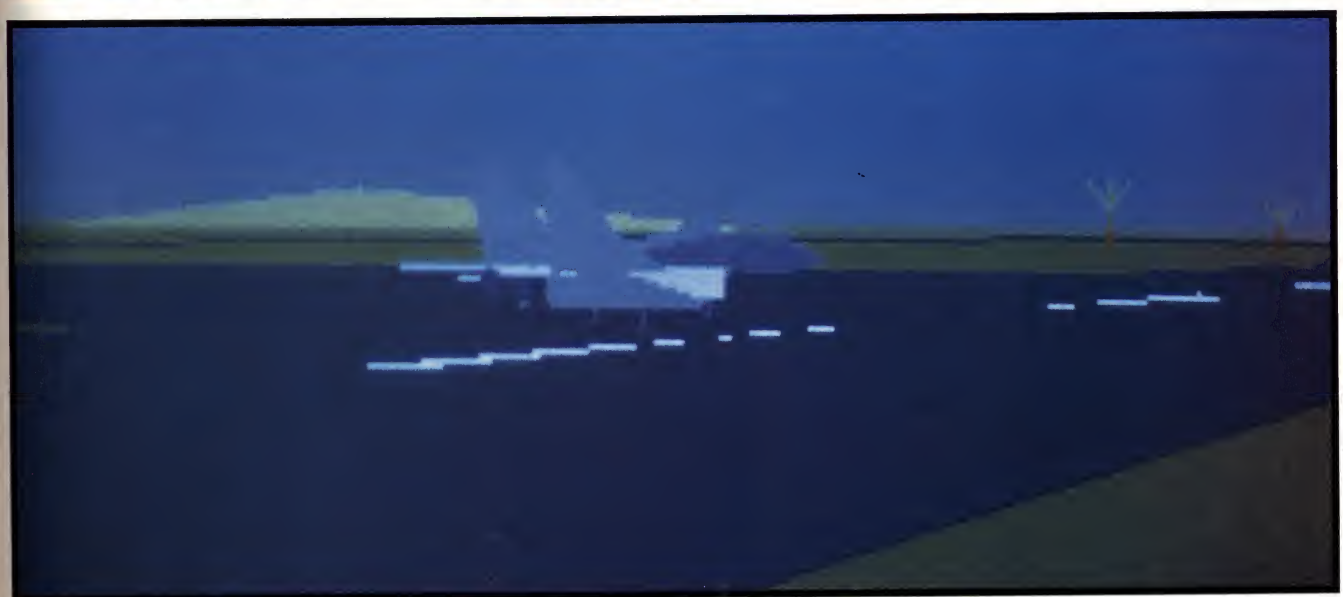
WHEN THIS GAME originally came out, it was universally panned. The main bone of contention was the fact that there wasn't really very much to *do*... does five missions sound a lot to you? Thought not. Another problem was the fact that the ground detail was rather sparse. 'But it's a true simulation of a real Mig-29,' cried the authors, Simis, 'The flight model is outstanding.' And it has to be said that the flight model *is* rather good. You can even pull off the old 'tailslide' stunt favoured by Russian test pilots: pull the nose up and go ballistic, then close the throttle and gasp as the Mig-29 slows and the digital speed readout actually goes into minus numbers. But you get bored of doing tailslides after a while. And you get bored of the ground attacks too. What you don't get bored of, however, is the dogfighting. It's very fast, very fluid and requires quite a bit of skill. Simis have stuck to the reality of things, and so an approaching aircraft (if flying head on towards you) will transform itself from a dot to a full size 'mutha' in a matter of seconds. And then it'll be behind you. Most of the dogfighting in *Mig-29* is WVR (i.e., Within Visual Range), so it's a case of everyone trying to get on everyone else's tail. And that's fun. No? Whatever you reckon, but like I said, it's done well. Oh, and I'd better quickly mention the views for any external view freaks reading. Er, they're crap. They're of no use to you, as a pilot. Simis *still* don't seem to have clued up as far as external views go, and in *Mig-29:Fulcrum* what you get is much the same as what you get in their recent *Harrier AV8B* game. 'Dynamic views' in other words. Flashy, showy, but useless – and there's no shadow under the plane, either. At full price *Mig-29: Fulcrum* was never a contender, but for 15 quid? Hmmm. I'm still not convinced. *DM*

Almost no scenery but a nice flight model

SCORE **70**

Specs
Minimum Memory: 586K **Minimum Processor:** 286
Minimum Speed: 16MHz **Installation:** Essential
Minimum Hard Disk Space: 2Mb **Minimum Graphics:** CGA
Sound Cards Supported: Ad-Lib
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick.

Price: £29.99 **Out:** Now **Publisher:** Domark **Telephone:** 081 780 2222



(Top) Cabbage crate at three o'clock: except it's not really a cabbage crate... and it's at 12 o'clock.
(Middle Top) The writing is meant to look 'Russian', but in reality it just looks very silly.
(Middle Bottom) A really good pilot could land even from this angle. Me? I crashed into the control tower.
(Bottom) One of the 'dynamic' but not really very useful external views.

Napoleonics

Do wargames present the player with an accurate simulation of the difficulties and loneliness of command? 'No' is the unfortunate answer. The trouble with traditional hex-based, bird's eye view wargames is that the player is given god-like powers. Peter Turcan has spent the past few years rectifying that. His 3D battlefield system won immediate acclaim from experienced wargamers.

Turcan justifiably threw out the traditional hex grid in favour of a 3D commander's eye view of the battlefield. Not satisfied with one revolution he dispensed with the simplified commands used in other wargames and created a text parser which could interpret commands in longhand. So, instead of clicking on a unit, selecting 'Attack' and clicking on an enemy unit to be attacked you could issue commands like 'Davout at 2.30pm order Compans to attack The Redoubt'.

Turcan wanted to make the experience as realistic as possible, so he created a proper hierarchical system of command, with intelligent commanders who each had distinct personalities. Orders would take a realistic time to reach the relevant commander. If the rider was killed, the orders would not even get there. Even if they did make it, there was always the possibility that the orders could not be carried out because the situation had changed, or that they would be ignored or misinterpreted. Furthermore, if no orders were forthcoming, or if they were no longer relevant, commanders would make their own decisions.

Most of Turcan's games were set during the Napoleonic wars and recreated some of the Corsican Ogre's most famous battles. On-Line entertainment have now repackaged three of these, Austerlitz, Borodino and Waterloo in a single set.

The battle of Austerlitz, which took place in 1805, is generally considered to have been Napoleon's finest victory. On this occasion Napoleon tricked the allied armies into attacking the wrong flank of his Grand Armee. It was a brilliant coup, so the real challenge here is for the player to take advantage of the Allies' superior starting position and turn historical defeat into hypothetical victory.

The battle of Borodino in 1812 was the turning point in Napoleon's fortunes. It was really a victory by default, because the Russian commander Kutosov decided to withdraw after the first day's fighting, although losses had been equally heavy on both sides, and neither army had really gained a positional advantage.

Finally, Waterloo in 1815, was not lost because of any inadequacies in Napoleon's command, but rather because of three unconnected incidents. Napoleon's brother, Jerome, turned what should have been a diversionary attack at Hougoumont into a full scale assault, resulting in tragic losses. Wellington's brilliant use of the terrain to conceal fresh troops turned the tide of the battle, and finally, the timely arrival of Blucher's army was enough to dash all hopes of a French victory.

Serious wargamers will find these three games a refreshing change from the run-of-the-mill stuff, but beginners may find it all a little too confusing. This is a worthwhile and cost effective way of adding them to any incomplete collection. *LS*

Three excellent and original Napoleonic wargames for tactical experts

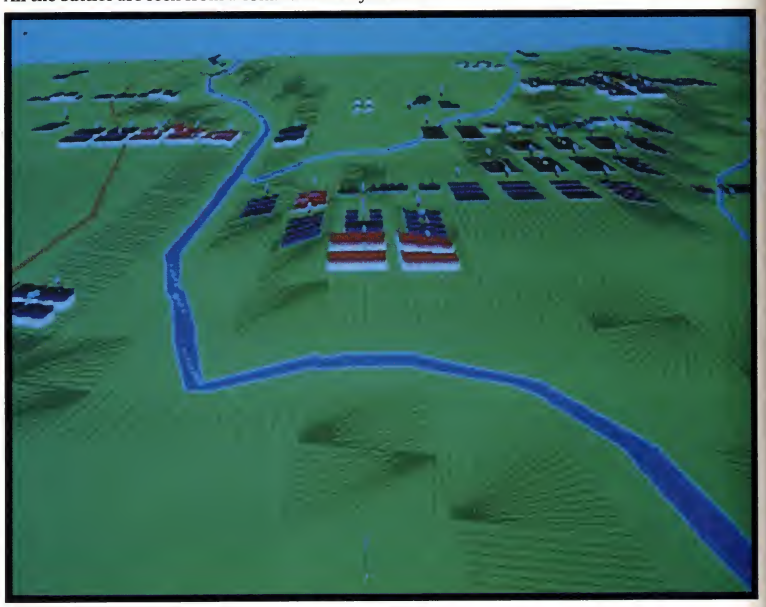
SCORE 79

specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 8086
Minimum Speed: 10MHz **Installation:** Optional
Minimum Hard Disk Space: 1.2 Mb **Minimum Graphics:** CGA
Sound Cards Supported: PC sound only
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

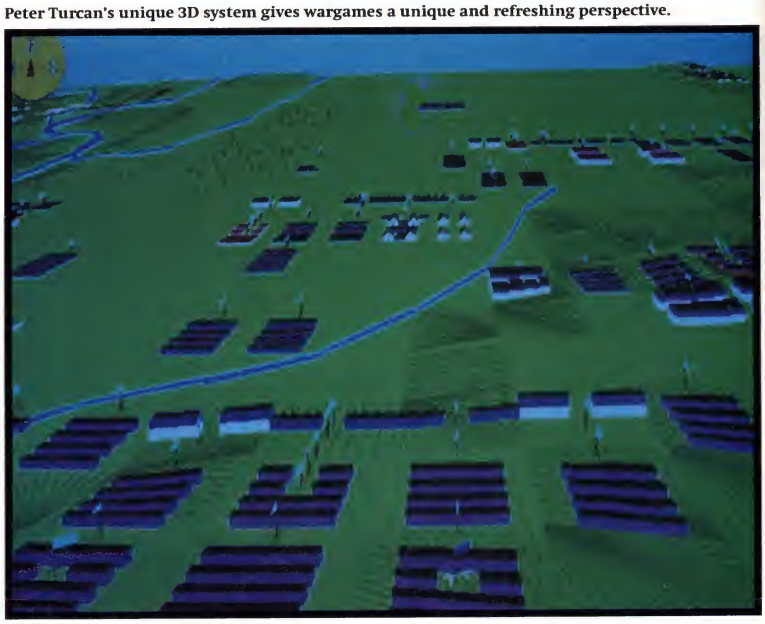
Price: £34.99 **Out:** Now **Publisher:** On-Line Entertainment **Telephone:** 081 558 6114

All the battles are seen from a commander's eye view.



Napoleon's Army at the beginning of the battle of Borodino.

Peter Turcan's unique 3D system gives wargames a unique and refreshing perspective.



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- Colour Option Available
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Not all wargamers wear anoraks and dream about hexes. Andrew Wright looks at the fine art of causing death and destruction on a grand scale.

WAR & PIECES

WAR IS HELL, as they say, but wargames can be difficult too. Perhaps that's the attraction – you can solve a dungeon adventure or discard 30 quid's worth of unbeatable arcade game but wargames are different every time, win or lose. They haven't really been able to shake off the anorak image entirely, despite attempts by some software houses to give them more universal appeal. Numerous variations have sprung up: some have an arcade/sim element like *M1 Tank Platoon* while others are more abstract like *Empire Deluxe*.

True wargames, if there is such a thing, have two characteristics. First, there's an element of simulation with hard and fast rules: it doesn't matter if it's a skirmish between medieval knights, an exchange of Napoleonic musketry or laser-guided gunfire.

Secondly, nothing ever happens in real time. No hands clenched on joystick here; you can spend hours agonising over irrelevant decisions and squinting down lines of sight without having to worry about whether some blighter is creeping up behind you.

So just what can computer games offer the hardened hex addict? And what can the average games player gain by venturing into this uncharted territory?

There are some things you can achieve in a computer game but not on the tabletop. And vice versa, of course. For starters, the PC takes over all those fiddly little calculations like deciding the outcome of 83 muskets fired at a range of 60 yards at a cavalry target moving downhill. You can get on with the action and not get completerly bogged down in lots of impossible detail. The other side of the coin is that this is all the stuff of life to many real wargamers – without detailed knowledge of how things work, the flavour of the game can be totally lost.

The other negative is that, whatever the programmers tell you, no hunk of code can plan and manoeuvre as well as a human opponent. The standard is getting better all the time

but real players can see the overall picture and spot gaps in a defence far more easily than a computer can. Humans can still beat chess computers – and chess is far easier to program than a decent wargame. The best you can hope for is a good, strong challenge from your Intel chip before you eventually wipe the floor with it.

Where the computer really scores, though, is in providing a ready made opponent that's available day or night, and a realistic challenge into the bargain. Imagine a miniature wargame spread out over a table. You can see your opponent's Tiger tank hiding in the woods. The best way to deal with it would be to sneak an anti-tank squad up behind it but, of course, he'll see you doing that and move up some infantry of his own. And so on. With an umpire or two and a lot of extra time, tabletop gamers can get round these unrealistic elements but it slows the game to a crawl.

In a good computer wargame such as the *V for Victory* series or some of SSI's better offerings like *Pacific War*, the computer will create the 'fog of war', playing the part of opponent and umpire, hiding some enemy units and moves from you and making the game much more uncertain.

Traditional wargames are divided into two basic types: miniature wargames and board wargames. Miniatures are colourful and entertaining, but the rules are no less complex than the board games where the accent is less on appearance and more on rigid structure. The advantage of the hex based genre is that you're not restricted to individual battles – while a group of miniature figures usually represents a battalion or a company, cardboard counters can represent anything from a squad to a division and the games can be designed for any scale at all. Oddly enough, computer games fall into the same categories: those obviously designed to look like miniature wargames and those based on the more complex board variety.

Isn't he cute?

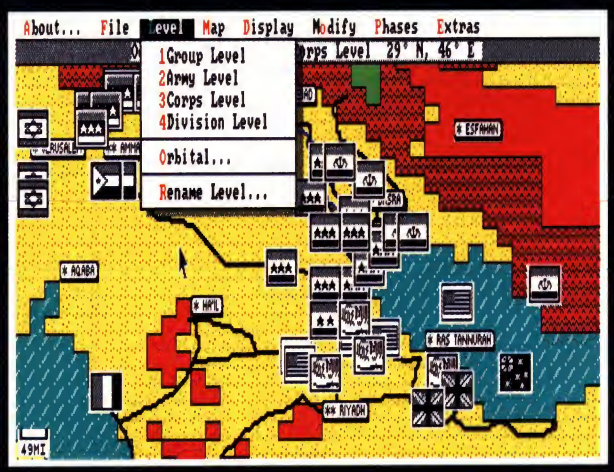
At the most simplistic level are the Miniatures range of wargames from Impressions with titles like *Rorke's Drift*, *Charge of the Light Brigade* and *Cohort. Cohort II*, for example, lets you take control of Roman legions, cavalry and archers in set piece scenarios or those of your own making.

Each individual soldier can be ordered to take basic actions like march or charge, or the whole unit can be given orders to move and form column, line or square. Although the soldiers have little built-in intelligence (they'll keep walking until they fall off the map) and the whole feel is one of over-simplification, it's a system with a kind of charm all of its own. A bit like poodles wearing ribbons.

The new game *Fields of Glory* from MicroProse looks very similar but promises an awful lot more in terms of complexity and playability. If you want to know more turn to the review on page 72 of this issue.

The unique Battlescape system *(Borodino, Waterloo* and *Gettysburg* on land plus Armada and Dreadnoughts at sea) moves up a level to units rather than men. It might be old hat but it's still great fun. In Gettysburg, for example, you are overall commander of either the Union or Confederate forces, and can issue orders to your Corps commanders who, in turn, instruct their brigade and divisional commanders. As you might have guessed, the idea is to recreate the flavour of the age rather than giving you tight control over the troops. Orders can go astray or simply be ignored and your subordinates can make the daftest decisions leaving you utterly powerless to intervene. By the time your messenger delivers the order, the battle has almost always moved on. It's infuriating at times but on the whole it's pretty good. ☞

Empire Deluxe – zero points for realism, zero points for appearance. But ten out of ten for sheer addictiveness and playability.



One of the first computer wargame systems was Microprose's Universal Military Simulator that can be used for virtually any wargame at all, on land, air, sea or even space.

Simplistic and not too hard, Cohort II nonetheless offers an interesting wargame.

Fields of Glory is the new kid on the block. It promises to make wargaming more accessible by implementing a unique new graphic approach.

☞ What you see on the screen is roughly what you would see if you were there at the time and you have to base strategic decisions on that. There's no detail – the units are just blocks on the simplistic terrain – and sound support is non-existent but it is an extremely good way to play a full scale battle without getting too detailed.

Moving more towards the board game in style, if not quite in appearance, are products like *Battle Isle*. The latest in the series has the catchy name *Historyline 1914-1918*. Both use a similar game system but the latter is an attempt at recreating the First World War (pretty obvious really). It is a rather pretentious game that claims to teach you all about the origins of the war via a series of map-based scenarios that are about as realistic as General Haig's chances of being awarded a posthumous Nobel Peace Prize. That said, the game is extremely playable, involving a wide range of unit types, from naval and air forces to cavalry, tanks and infantry. Although it quickly becomes nothing at all to do with the First World War, the tactical and strategic elements are very good indeed and it will certainly keep you out of trouble for a while, not least because the computer plays extremely well.

Naval warfare lends itself well to computer gaming – and the best so far has to be *Great Naval Battles*. Here you can take command of a ship or a task force and sail out into the unknown to do battle with whatever you find. Although it's pretty hit and miss in that you tend to wander the high seas in search of something to shoot at, when the jolly old battle ensign is hoisted there are plenty of tactical options and some good views of your 'miniature' ships.

There's not enough to keep you playing for too long – there's a limit to the amount of enjoyment you can get out of decimating a convoy with 18 inch guns, and the campaign can get bogged down for lack of ships.

CONTACTS

Fields of Glory, M1 Tank Platoon,UMS II: **MicroProse 0666 504326**
Charge of the Light Brigade, Cohort II, Rorkes Drift: **Impressions 071 351 2133**
Empire Deluxe, MacArthur's War, V for Victory: **Electronic Arts 0753 549442**
Battle Isle: **UBI Soft 081 343 9055**
Historyline 1914-1918: **Kompart 0727 868005**
Great Naval Battles, Line In The Sand, Pacific War: **US Gold 021 625 3388**
Armada, Dreadnoughts, Gettysburg, Waterloo: **Turcan Games 071 625 8455**

What the hex?

Board games are where the really serious wargamers are at, but when they're transferred over to the computer screen anything can happen. The respected wargames developer SSI is as responsible for great games like *Pacific War* as it is for the seriously weak *Line In The Sand*. The latter has to be the most simplistic attempt at wargaming I've had the misfortune to come across. I'd rather be buried in sand than play that one.

The SSG title, *MacArthur's War*, is a well-designed hex style wargame covering the war in Korea. It comes with eight varying scenarios, with colourful names like Naktong Bulge, but suffers from a fairly clumsy interface that takes an awful lot of getting used to. The combination of ESC, RETURN and arrow keys to cycle through menus went out with the ark but if you want to play this one you'd better get into practice.

The scenarios are challenging in that there are about ten enemy units for every one of yours. That said, you have crack troops where the enemy has cannon fodder, proving that God doesn't always side with the big battalions. ☞

The little town of Gettysburg looking over Cemetery Ridge. You couldn't tell? Once you realise the coloured blocks are your men it all becomes clearer.

(Left and below) Hardly realistic, but better than a dose of trench foot – Blue Bytes' Historyline.

Great Naval Battles doesn't quite have spray coming over the bridge or the smell of salt in the air, but it's an excellent naval simulation.

☞ *Pacific War* is an example of the global scale that's possible with hex and counter style games. And a damn good effort it is too, though it needs a certain amount of dedication to understand the complexities of the game system. The rules cover almost every aspect of the war against the Japanese including land, sea and air combat, convoys, submarines and supply lines. You have all the historically available US ships at your disposal but unfortunately you only have a staff of one so there's plenty to do.

If you're a dedicated wargame fan there's only one computer system that really matches the thrill of a solid board wargame and that's the *V for Victory* series.

The 256 colour graphics are excellent and the manuals and reference books are bulging with useful information and handy hints on gameplay. The rules are provided in fine detail so you can always work out why an attack failed or your favourite unit got wiped out, yet there's still no sense of being bogged down in trivia while you strain to get on with your master plan.

Velikiye Luki is the best, but *Arnhem* and *Utah Beach* are easier to spell. If you want to recreate the thrill of a realistic wargame without spending hours setting out your forces or sending them three inches sideways every time you reach for the dice, *V for Victory* has to be first choice.

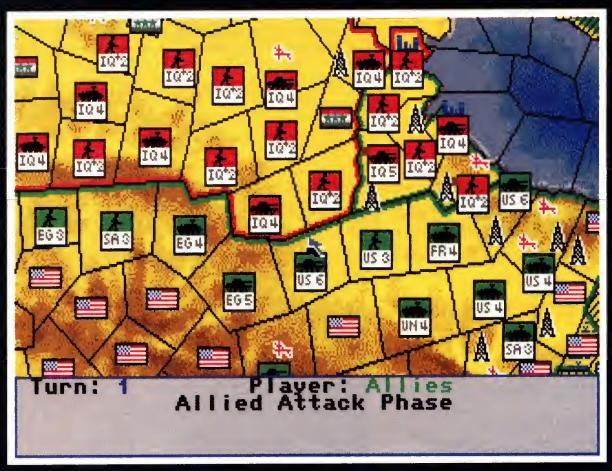
Over in the real world.

Wargames of one type or another have been used by armies the world over for training in basic tactics and testing proposed battle plans. Germany's fortunes have been pretty mixed, though. The Schleiffen Plan of 1914 that kicked off the First World War was extensively play-tested with a variety of British responses thrown in, but the likelihood of a trench-bound stalemate never emerged. The success of the D-Day landings in the next war was partly due to the fact that most of the high-ranking German officers were playing an official wargame on the night of the invasion. Ironically, it was assumed that the Allies would land in northern France and not in Normandy.

As far as the modern-day army is concerned, though, traditional tabletop systems are out. Nowadays it's all done by computers; for instance the IDHEX system at the Army's Staff College at Camberley is used for training.

Part of IDHEX is the Camberley Land Air War System or CLAWS, an interactive 200 terminal system that recreates a conflict between two large opposing forces. A student sits at each terminal, representing a key appointment in the command headquarters, and making tactical decisions in real time. (The PC version will be out soon – hardware requirements will be a couple of thousand null modem cables and 25 spare expansion slots.) The other part of the IDHEX system is a concept analysis system. And, before you ask, I've no idea what it means but I'm told it's fun. Anyway the computer works to a pre-programmed battle plan and individual officers control troop and platoon sized units fighting against it.

Despite the government's swinging axe, the army is already testing multi-million pound systems that resemble the RAF's state of the art cockpit sized flight simulators, except that they simulate armoured rather than aerial combat. The ones on trial at present involve pre-planned actions involving hundreds of independently moving vehicles which respond to commands from their troop leaders and engage enemy forces using artificial intelligence. They include realistic sound and full motion 3D graphics all round. I'll be first in the queue to check that one out. Z



Not one of SSI's better contributions to the wargaming market. Still, Line in the Sand kept me occupied for a minute or two.

And I thought Korea was a typeface until I came across MacArthur's War. State of the art graphics and sound it doesn't have, but it's still a reasonable game.

Step into the shoes of great American admirals (with funny names like Chester Nimitz and Bull Halsey) and re-fight the entire Pacific War against the jolly Jap giant.

Second in the V for Victory series – Viliky Liki. Sorry, Veluke Luki. Err, Veluki Liki... some town in Russia somewhere.

bits & PCs

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO: BITS & PCs, *PC ZONE*, 19 BOLSOVER ST. LONDON W1P 7HJ

DOS 6 causes problems, *X-Wing* refuses to run and a rather strange Caledonian letter appears in the post. All grist to the mill of *Mark Burgess.*

Oh boy, ms dos 6 is here

I WONDER IF YOU can help me? I have recently bought a 486-DX2-66 computer with 214Mb of hard disk and 8Mb RAM. I have tried to load *Ultima Underworld* but, although it installs onto the hard disk, when I try to run it I get the message: 'UNDERWORLD WILL NOT RUN. OUT OF EMS MEMORY'.

The machine has been pre-loaded with Windows and DOS 6. I believe this may be part of the problem. However I do not know how to make the program run. This is very frustrating as I would like to buy the later versions of *Underworld* and because I think I must have loads of memory left.

Do you think you could give me any advice? Do you also think this should be mentioned on the game or possibly in your reviews? I would think that more and more new machines are being supplied with MS DOS pre-loaded. I would appreciate your help and your comments.

David Clish, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland

I have had enough of this pre-loaded nonsense. We ordered a 486DX recently and it came with Windows, MS-DOS (5, thank God) and Ami Pro. None of this software came with manuals or the original disks. What use is Ami Pro without one? And why take up over 7Mb of a game magazine's Hard Disk space with it?

Anyway, back to your problem. It is all the fault of MS-DOS 6. DoubleSpace reserves RAM for mapping functions and even if you REM it out, DOS will still see it and set aside memory. The only solution I can see is either to uninstall MS-DOS 6 or else get a bigger hard disk. Shameful and outrageous, I know.

As for reviews, the problem is shared by so many games that it would probably be better to put a blanket warning on the front page. It should read:

1. Most games need the full 640K base RAM to work. Unload all TSR programs.

2. Many games are bugged so don't always blame your computer.

3. Few games will actually work with any kind of disk compression. **MB.**

Owning up

I MUST SAY, I thought I knew *everything* about computers! I read the DOS manual cover to cover *twice* and every magazine article from the word go, and found myself laughing at the problems sent in.

But I thought too soon... What the %&*^?@ is a local bus and what is a cache. There I said it.

Even though I only have a measly 286 16MHz machine I had really thought I knew it all. But hey, the 286 can still play some pretty neat games like *Pac Man?* And the Sound Blaster works. Having said that, I have just finished *Dune 2* for the second time with 2 Mb left free on my hard disk.

Nicholas Evans, London, SE24

Well, a bus is just a set of wires or solder traces which have a common purpose. This normally means transferring data. For reasons to do with computer archaeology the standard (ISA) bus handles 16 bits at 8MHz just like the old XT. Extended architecture buses like EISA and MCA are 32/16 bit but need to stay at 8MHz to maintain downward compatibility. These are general buses that carry information to and from the CPU, Disk, Video, RAM and LAN (if any).

A local bus concentrates on the video or the disk and should have full 32 bits at 33MHz. So data – to a disk drive or a monitor – can be passed to the peripheral far more quickly. How useful! I think they're over-hyped and unnecessary for normal users but I know I'm in a minority. For what it's worth, I wouldn't buy a 32 bit video bus unless I was using 24 bit colour at 1024 x 768. Remember, if the software driver is no good it will nullify any supposed advantage. The most common standard for video local buses is called VESA but there are also NEC (the first) and OPTi. None of them are compatible with each other. Intel is still talking about its PCI (Processor Connect Interactive) which will bring 64 bit transfer at 33MHz with the bus making peripherals independent of the processor.

A cache is a small section of fast memory chips which supplies the CPU with data and instructions faster than the main memory can. That's so the CPU doesn't hang around waiting for data to be read from disk. 486DX chips have their own internal cache but 386 machines need a motherboard cache – usually 32K.

Some disk controllers have a cache memory and the principal is the same – frequently requested data is held in memory from where it can be retrieved faster than from the disk.

What's the matter with Pac Man? **MB.**

X-Wing hanger

For some reason I cannot fathom, *X-Wing* does not work on my computer. The fault is that the mouse pointer will only move halfway across the screen thus denying me access to the right half of the screen. I own a 486dlc running at 33MHz. The mouse is VIP and has two settings; Microsoft and PC. The game reacts the same on both settings. I have waited ages for this game and then this happens. I can sympathise with Mr Cursor. So what's wrong then?

PS. I'm a student at the University of Central Lancaster (crap name!) and our computer newsletter is called Bits and PCs. Any connection?

Bod, Burtonwood, Cheshire

X-Wing is pernickety about sound configuration. It will hang if you set up for music, sound effects and speech and do not have enough memory to support them all – most games will play what they have room for. It also hangs if you have two soundcards installed or try to use different protocols for the different effects. I presume your mouse works fine with other programs. The problem is the sound set-up or a soundcard clash. **MB.**

PS. Aaaaarrrrgh! No, I thought the name was original and clever. Better than University of Central Lancaster anyway.

Fore!

I HAVE A PROBLEM with the program *David Leadbetter's Golf*. Whenever I try to use the Video Recorder option the game crashes, usually with a message stating that there is 'not enough memory to load the sprites'. The message sometimes does not occur and the computer locks up completely. This means that unless I am willing to play the game for more than four hours I cannot play in four round tournaments (because I am unable to restart any games).

Another problem I have is that on a few occasions the game will crash while I am playing. I suspect this problem, and the one mentioned above, is due to a problem with memory, but my in-depth knowledge of computers is not good enough to resolve the problem without assistance. I have been considering the purchase of a memory manager but am not sure if this would help or if the solution is simpler. I am therefore writing to ask you for your help.

I use a Tandon 386-25SX with 106Mb hard drive and 4Mb RAM with an SVGA monitor. It arrived with Microsoft Windows already installed along with three packages (Lotus 1-2-3 for Windows 1.1, Ami Pro 2.0 and Freelance Graphics 1.0) and MS DOS 5.0.

Vaughan Wright. St Neots, Cambs

From the print-outs you sent I see that you're right; it's a memory problem (it nearly always is). Type MEM to see how much you have available. David Leadbetter's Golf needs 600K conventional and 1Mb EMS. The line EMM386.EXE 1024 RAM takes care of the latter. The problem is that you have TSR programs competing for base RAM. REM out all inessentials in the AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files or make a boot disk. Incidentally, David Leadbetter's Golf won't work if you're using Stacker or any other disk compression utility. **MB.**

Alien

YES IT'S ME AGAIN, 'confused of Glasgow', with more mouth-watering questions. If you're unable to answer them feel free to pass them to a rival mag.

YIN (that's Scottish for one)

Being impoverished, I don't own a soundcard, what I do have is a DAC connected from LPT1 to my state of the art hi-fi (a walkman on a pile of books). Now, under the right circumstances, and weather permitting, the results are really very good. My question is this; is it possible to configure my 386SX to have LPT1 as the default for all sound output and if so, how?

TWA (Scottish for two)

Is there a batch file or some other means of re-booting my machine using a different CONFIG.SYS/AUTOEXEC.BAT other than third party software or a boot disk. I'd like to be able to include it in the .BAT file for games that require conventional, extended, expanded and some of my next door neighbour's memory. Which, I might add seems to be the norm these days. Don't tell me to go out and buy more RAM, £40.00+ per meg for the IBM PS/1 342 model is bordering on the ridiculous and beyond my means. I hope someone from IBM is reading this, if so take note.

THREE (bi-lingual)

Why is everyone awaiting the arrival of Windows/NT, I have it already, at least I think I have. If NT stands for nervous twitch or nervous tension, then yes I've definitely got Windows/NT. Anyone like to buy a second hand PS/1 with Windows/NT pre-installed? Ripley, first officer of the 'Nostromo' signing off.

```
ECHO OFF
C:\DOS\SMARTDRIVE.EXE /L
@ECHO OFF
PROMPT=HELLO! TODAY IS $D $P$G
PATH
C:\QEMM;C:\DOS;C:\WINDOWS;\WINDOWS;C:\QUICKM
ENU;C:\WORKS;C:\PDIR;C:\
C:\DOS\MODE CON: CODEPAGE
PREPARE=((850)C:\DOS\EGA.CPI) >NUL
C:\DOS\KEYB UK,,C:\DOS\KEYBOARD.SYS /ID:166
CHCP 850
LH /L:1,6400 DOSKEY DIR=PDIR $1 $2 $3 $4 $5 $6 $7
$8 [I think there's an error here]
SET TEMP C:\TEMP
CD\DOS
CHKVIRUS
C:\WINDOWS\MOUSE.COM /Y
C:\DOS\CAPSLOCK
CD\QUIKMENU
QM
DEVICE=C:\DOS\HIMEM.SYS
DEVICE=C:\DOS\EMM386.EXE 1024 RAM HIGHSCAN
BUFFERS=20,0
FILES=30
DOS=UMB
LASTDRIVE=I
FCBS=4,0
STACKS=0,0
DEVICEHIGH /L:1,12048=C:\DOS\SETVER.EXE
DEVICE=C:\DOS\SMARTDRIVE.EXE /DOUBLE_BUFFER
COUNTRY=044,,C:\DOS\COUNTRY.SYS
DEVICEHIGH /L:1,15792=C:\DOS\DISPLAY.SYS
CON=(,437,1)
INSTALL=C:\DOS\NLSFUNC.EXE C:\DOS\COUNTRY.SYS
INSTALL=C:\DOS\KEYB.COM
UK,437,C:\DOS\KEYBOARD.SYS
DOS=HIGH
DEVICEHIGH /L:1,44400=C:\DOS\DBLSPACE.SYS /MOVE
```

Is there anything in here that's surplus to requirements when it comes to playing memory hungry games. Can you spot the syntax error that keeps being reported?

Confused, Glasgow. (Mr S. Grice)

What? We have no rivals.

1. What a strange solution. To redirect output to a (non-existent) soundcard to the printer port would need a TSR program. I doubt if there is one available as shareware. Why don't you simply run a couple of wires from the PC's internal speaker and solder on a 3.5mm jack which can then plug into your Walkman? If you're techy enough to have a digital to analogue converter it should pose no problems!

2. MS-DOS 6 lets you do just that by presenting you with a menu which allows you to choose different parts of your CONFIG.SYS file on boot up.

3. Has Windows NT shipped yet? I don't think so.

On the AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS printouts; I've never used MS-DOS 6 – which you must have because of the DBLSPACE entry and L: (memory maker) switches. The line that worries you looks okay to me – you're passing a set of variables over to a DOSKEY macro. Two things; memory maker isn't very efficient and it might be causing problems. Second, the HIGHSCAN switch for EM386.EXE checks for availability of UMAs (Upper Memory Areas). On some computers this can have no effect or else it identifies as available blocks those that aren't or even just hangs the machine. What error message are you getting anyway?

There is a feature in MS-DOS 6 that allows you to step through your AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files line by line as an aid to de-bugging; to activate it press F8. Why not try that and see what's causing the problem. Better still, re-write the lot using the menu option to call different .BAT and CONFIG. files for each application with only the basics entered as common. Incidentally, what is C:\QEMM doing in the path? You're not calling it.

One thing in these files that will cause a problem with memory hungry games is the use of DoubleSpace. Even if you REM it out, DOS will know it's there and set aside memory for mapping. This is serious for games that normally need the full 640K. **MB.**

Enough is enough

After using DR DOS 6 for some 18 months, I have finally given up the struggle and bought MS DOS 6 with which I am extremely pleased – so far!

I was perfectly happy until software houses wrote games specifically with DOS 5 in mind, which caused problems for users of DR DOS 6. Several games would not run or had problems running under DR DOS, these included: *Harrier Jump Jet*, speech on *F-15 Strike Eagle III*, *David Leadbetters' Golf*, a *Formula One Grand Prix* demo and, worst of all, *Strike Commander* which wouldn't even install!

I must say however that Novell (Digital Research) are trying very hard to correct problems and produce patches for DR DOS 6. Even with this in mind, there are only so many times you are willing to ring Düsseldorf even if the number is free!

If you're a flight sim fan like myself who buys all flight simulation releases, the last thing you want to do is stare at the box unable to play it while the patch is being worked on hundreds of miles away.

Sorry DR DOS 6 but enough is enough!

PS. Please mention my BBS which is free and non-profit making (in fact it costs me a fortune):

Flame – Out Flight Simulation B.B.S.
081 773-8262 8-N-1
21.00hrs – 01.30hrs (24hrs. in September)

Michael Hurt, Carshalton, Surrey

Er, what's your question? I'm sorry to see DR DOS having problems. It has consistently out-performed MS DOS – think of the features of DR DOS 5 compared with the sluggish MS DOS 3 and the bugged MS DOS 4 or the DiskMAX program in DR DOS 6. But DR DOS never got the support that MS DOS could command. Windows made things worse, of course. However, there are users who stick with DR DOS but these are usually businesses which can commission their own software and don't need Windows packages. There was a rumour that Microsoft put special calls in Windows 3.1 to sabotage DR DOS. Allegedly.

I suppose you know why IBM used Microsoft (whose speciality was languages) rather than Digital Research (whose speciality was operating systems) for the operating system on the PC? When IBM went to Digital Research, the boss was flying his plane and kept the big cheeses waiting in the office. They felt that insufficient respect had been paid to their status. When they called on Microsoft however, they got the full red carpet treatment. The rest, as they say, is history. **MB.**

PC ghettoblaster

I AM THINKING about buying a notebook PC, mainly for programming use. However, I also want to play a lot of games on it. In the future I would want to add a soundcard and CD ROM drive, but buying a laptop with a docking station port and the other features I am looking for (e.g. SVGA output port) is excessively expensive. Is there any way to connect a soundcard/ CD ROM to a laptop without a docking port? Would a SCSI interface help?

David Elmet, York

An SCSI interface will help with the CD ROM, but not all portables have one. Similarly, not all of them have a SVGA port – most have a connection for an external VGA monitor. Make sure that the portable has a standard SVGA port supporting 800 x 600 pixels.

Soundcards are even more of a problem. In the old days, meaning about two years ago, laptops could take proper AT expansion cards although even then it was rare to find one that took a full size card. Because portables have got smaller it is unusual to find such a feature now. You have to use a parallel port adapter or get an add-on that gives your portable pukka AT expansion slots. There are some third party manufacturers of these, and if your portable can take them you're in luck because portable manufacturers stick to their own standards. Unless you have a well known brand you will be forced to buy proprietorial add-ons rather than third party peripherals.

The sockets on the back of a laptop will be for PCMCIA (Personal Computer Memory Card International) cards. All you need to know is that portables use PCMCIA sockets where a desktop would use expansion sockets. These cards usually carry extra memory and some can emulate drives but there isn't one that emulates a soundcard.

While there are a couple of soundcards for portables that run under Windows only (Thrippleswoods & Logitech), the only DOS soundcard I know of is the Portblaster from Westpoint Creative (0743 248590) which is due out later this year at about £149. It plugs into the printer port and is Sound Blaster compatible. A TSR intercepts calls to a soundcard and redirects them.

There are also sound devices – like the Disney Sound Source – which connect to the parallel port but they tend to be indifferently supported by games software.

I don't know what games you want to play, but many of them now demand fairly high specs in the computer. The very least you can get away with would be a 386DX with 4Mb. As modern games are also farcically big you will need a large Hard Disk as well. **MB.**

TROUBLESHOOTER

FEATURING THE HACKMASTERS™ AND THE TRUEPLAYERS™

The HackMasters™, new age retro-engineers, have launched a huge salvo against the broadside of TruePlayer's™ 'virtuous reality' playing style. A broad range of hacks, cracks, and cheats for the latest titles this month, followed by a HackMasters™ Book with over 100 new and unprinted hacks for PC games, past, present, and future which will appear on the cover of the November Issue. In reply the TruePlayers™, whose playing revolves around small biro maps and scribbled down 'runes', now announce their weekly Tips Line.

Phone: 071-323-3332
Ask for TruePlayer™ Tips from 2.00pm to 6.00pm on Wednesdays only. Starting from 11 August 1993.

No other magazine can offer this kind of free service. Complete solutions, maps, cheat, hacks, and all sorts of gamesplaying tips for all the latest games will be on offer. Just ring and hear us sing.

The HackMasters™

HackMasters™ and *PC Zone* take no responsibility for direct or indirect damage caused to software and hardware by the use of the HackMaster™ hacks. It's nigh on impossible to damage anything with these hacks, but, you'll understand, we have to cover our yellow chicken behinds.

AFTER THE RATHER pitiful show of last month's HackMasters™ (all this TruePlayer™ talk of spells and trolls has made us physically ill) we return, this month, with a vengeance. A broad spectrum of the games we know you're playing are covered: *Prince Of Persia II, Eye Of The Beholder III, Comanche,* and *Space Hulk*. We know you're playing these games, we know you're stuck, and we know you want to cheat. Read on.

Backup

Most, if not all, of the hacks on this page will require changing actual game files. It is then sensible, if not prudent, to back up the file specified in the hack. To do this, simply enter the directory containing the file, say for example `SAVEGAME.SAV`, and back it up thus:

`COPY SAVEGAME.SAV SAVEGAME.BAK`

If you make an bad mistake and/or the Government reduces funding for AIDS research then restore the files thus:

`COPY SAVEGAME.BAK SAVEGAME.SAV`

Simple as pimples. But remember the bottom line – don't ring us, unless it's an emergency or you're really stuck.

Debug

Somewhere in the depths of uncharted territory (i.e., your DOS folder) is a very useful program called *debug*. It allows you to edit files of all descriptions and subtly change the data. It is the program we will use most in the HackMaster Zone™, and since it is the most user unfriendly program *on this planet*, a brief introduction/explanation may be in order.

Here's a step by step guide to a *debug* hack:

To run it just type `DEBUG` in the appropriate directory (i.e., the one mentioned in the hack blurb). It should run automatically and produce a little '>' prompt. If you get a 'file not found' style error then your DOS path hasn't been set properly. Refer to the MS DOS manual and remember the bottom line – don't ring us.

1 `›NITEMS_01.BIN‹return›`

Now, once you have a little '>' prompt you should type in the commands listed in the program, starting with the line above, the 'N' command. This tells *debug* which program is to be hacked. There should be no space between the 'N' and the full filename.

2 `›L ‹return›`

This command actually loads the file you've just specified into memory and into the awaiting hands of the hacker.

3 `›E 0462 FF ‹return›`

This is the Edit function. Type it as it appears above, i.e., with a space between the E and the address (011F) and the 'FF' (255 in decimal)

4 `›E 045A 10 10 10`

If the edit command looks something like this (i.e., a list of numbers), then press RETURN after the address and *debug* will repeat your command. Then simply type in the values which follow (90, 90 etc.) pressing SPACE between each one, except the last when you should press RETURN. So basically, the command should be enacted thus (with what you must type in red):

`›E 045A ‹RETURN›`
`21FB:045A 08.10 ‹space› 07.10 ‹space› 00.10 ‹return›`
`›`

5 `›W ‹return›`

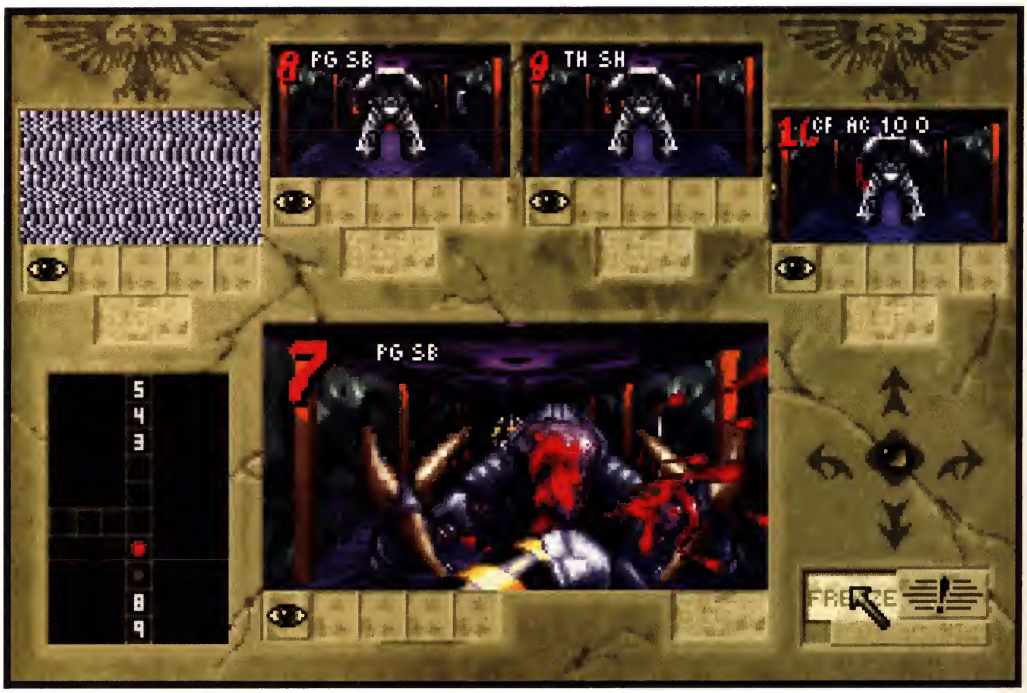
This command writes the hacked file back onto the disk. A message saying: 'writing xxxxx bytes' will appear, where xxxxx is the size of the file (it varies). Nothing has been changed on your hard disk until you type this command. So if you've made a mistake earlier just quit *debug* and start the process again.

6 `›Q ‹return›`

This quits you back to DOS.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The bottom line is that you'll have to have a specky chromosome in your genes (or else borrow one) to achieve maximum satisfaction from the HackMaster's™ experience. If you are not very brave or you are having teething troubles then the bottom line is: 'Do not ring us' unless it is an emergency or it's the TruePlayer™ Tips Help Line day.



Never ever ever (ever) die again with the Space Hulk mega-hack. If the genestealers attack you, they die!

SPACE HULK
(Electronic Arts)

This game is piping hot with just enough machismo to balance the HackMasters™ books, but you may be finding this game a mite tough. Allow us to redress the balance with our petite yet useful infinite time hack. Firstly backup the file HULK.EXE as HULK.BAK. Then copy the file HULK.EXE to HULK.TMP. Enter I and do the following:

```
>NHULK.TMP
>L
>E 9DEF 90 Infinite Freeze Time
>W
>Q
```

Now copy the file HULK.TMP to HULK.EXE. If you are using *Xtree Gold* or *PC Tools* you have to search for the bytes:

```
74 08 48
```

and change them to:

```
74 08 90
```

for the same effect.

PRINCE OF PERSIA II
(Electronic Arts)

Another communal sigh came up from the HackMasters™ when they laid their eyes on the *Prince of Persia 2* code. Yet another built-in cheat left by the programmers saves us all the trouble. No backing up. No *debug*. No faffing about with hex. Just simply type:

```
PRINCE YIPPEEYAHOO
```

when running the game from DOS (remember the space between the two words). Early versions of the game have a different cheat word. If the above does not work try:

```
PRINCE MAKINIT
```

To all appearances the game runs the same, but now the following keys have a range of cheaty, anti-TruePlayer™ effects:

ALT+N Go to next level
F2 Shows your position in co-ordinates
F6 Shows a ruler on screen
K Kills all enemies on screen
Shift+K Lose one health bottle
Shift+T Gain one health bottle
Shift+W Float down gaps
Shift+R Show room number
Shift+I Invert screen
Shift+B Turn off background
+ and – Increase/decrease time limit.

And with joystick mode on:

PGDN Warp half-step right
END Warp half-step left
PGUP Warp full step left
HOME Warp full step right
Cursor left One pixel left
Cursor right One pixel right

PREMIER MANAGER
(Gremlin)

To obtain a player with 'The Ultimate' (i.e., 99) handling, place him in the goalkeeper position on the team list and then phone 753-423. It's a good idea to do this to every team member so you can milk as much dosh from transfer as possible. Of course, you could approach it in a 'real life' way and simply re-route all the funds through foreign bank accounts or pay it in gold bullion. Alternatively, to save even more cash, buy up rubbishy players from the Part-Time League and 'recharge' them with the cheat. This cheat is courtesy of a New Initiate, James Woods, who wins a game from the *PC Zone* cupboard.

COMANCHE
(US Gold)

You know what it's like. You buy a game like say, *Comanche*. And you enjoy it. And you get good at it. And then the mission disk comes out. And it's harder and you want to play the later levels but you can't because you're rubbish. Try this then. Backup the file COMANCHE.NAM in the main COMANCHE folder. Now, using *debug*, put:

```
01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01
```

(that's ten '1's) into the following addresses:

```
033A for TRAINING
0343 for OVERKILL
```

to be able to play any mission in the original game, or into these addresses:

```
034D for OVERLOAD
0357 for RESTORE PEACE
0361 for CLEAN SWEEP
```

for *Mission Disk 1* tours. These hacks will mark the ten missions per tour as 'done' for the pilot in slot one. So, for instance, if you wanted to make all the missions in the Overkill campaign playable, enact the following in *debug:*

```
>NCOMANCHE.NAM
>L
>E 0343 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01
>W
>Q
```

SLEEPWALKER
(Ocean)

John M. Greenland wants to be initiated into the HackMaster™ ranks. His offering is a cheat for Ocean's charity 'em-up, *SleepWalker*. On the title screen, when the *SleepWalker* title pops up, with red-nosed Lee and Ralph strolling across, type:

```
dingadingdangmydangalonglinglong
```

There should be no spaces between the words and if you get it right then the red noses go green. Now, during the game, RETURN will skip you a level and TAB with give you an energy boost. Not bad, John. We are proud to give you the rank of Acolyte HackMaster™. Well done. Receive a game from the cupboard for your effort.

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER III
(US Gold)

We shan't soil this hack with any meaningless preamble, just play the game as per usual, save a game in slot one and then exit. Enter the directory SAVEGAME and backup the file ITEMS_01.BIN and then *debug:*

```
>NITEMS_01.BIN
>L
>E 0462 FF 05        Mega-HPS plyr 1
>E 0464 FF 05        Mega max-HPS plyr 1
>E 06D5 FF 05        Mega HPS plyr 2
>E 06D7 FF 05        Mega-max HPS plyr 2
>E 0948 FF 05        Mega HPs plyr 3
>E 094A FF 05        Mega-max HPS plyr 3
>E 0BBB FF 05        Mega HPs plyr 4
>E 0BBD FF 05        Mega-max HPS plyr 4
>E 0476 13 63        max strength plyr 1
>E 06E9 13 63        max str plyr 2
>E 095C 13 63        max str plyr 3
>E 0BCF 13 63        max str plyr 4
>E 047A 63 63 99     dexterity &
                     constitution plyr 1
>E 06ED 63 63 99     dex+conplyr 2
>E 0960 63 63 99     dex+con plyr 3
>E 0BD3 63 63 99     dex+con plyr 4
>E 045A 10 10 10     Level 16 char 1
>E 06CD 10 10 10     Level 16 char 2
>E 0940 10 10 10     Level 16 char 3
>E 0BB3 10 10 10      Level 16 char 4
>W
>Q
```

HACKMASTER'S™ BIN

James R Ewart and his *Serpent Isle* cheat.
Mr Tariq Janjua and his *Starcontrol* Mega cheat.

The TruePlayers™

ERIC THE UNREADY

WE RECEIVED A letter from Marshall of St Albans. It read: 'How does Eric the Unready save the tragic sacrificial virgin from throwing herself into the jaws of Molochi, the God of Impacted Wisdom Teeth?' Our first reaction was 'What the hell are you gibbering on about you weird thing?' Our second reaction was 'Why have you got no surname?' Our third reaction was to print, as a true TruePlayer™ reply, a complete spoil for *Eric The Unready*, supplied by Thomas Roebuck. He's aged 9 so you may find some spelling mistakes we couldn't decipher in the text.

The farm

Go into the barn and take the rope. Open the cabinet and grab the tort ease and hog wild. Enter the lav and take the newspaper before tying the rope to the hook. Go down and give the hog wild to the pig. Next, whip up to the farmyard, kiss the pig, and slip into the barn. Watch the cut scene.

Torus

Wait twice and then take the helmet and card. Go to the hall and wait for a bit. Once assigned to the quest, head for the castle and take the kindling. Go to the armoury and exchange the card for the cloak. Wear the cloak and fetch the bean from the pond. Go west into the ice cream shop. Once inside place the kindling on the fire and use the torch. Wear the earmuffs and slip into the garden outside the castle. Plant the bean in the garden and then use the water on it. Climb the beanstalk and talk to Budd. Afterwards, go back to the ice cream shop and give a coin to the man inside. Give a coin to Ponce and then, when everyone is asleep and Ponce has spoken to you, enter the castle. Go upstairs and eavesdrop on the plot. Go down and wait for Budd to enter and then head to the village green. Pull the banner and place it on the duck pond.

The pitchfork of damocles

Go to the tree and use the float on the roots. Go to the big tree, pull the branches, and open the trap door. Slip down the trap door. Open the board with the pickaxe, go in, and pull the rug. Open the trap door and use the key on the case. Grab the beard and go upstairs. Pull the bones and take the license (I assume it is 'license' – spelling is, unfortunately, not one of Thomas' strongpoints – he's put 'licens'). Exit the house and open the mailbox. Take the mail and kneel down. Wear the beard and then go to the clock place. Give the mail to Ed McDwarf and then the 'licens'. Go west, win the game, then exit and wait until you are given some dosh. Go to Frans and buy the starter rock. Place it in the slingshot and then pull the lever. Get on the well and push the green button. Shoot the red button, stand up, and take the pitchfork. Use the bunge cords on the branches and climb down. Enter the house and proceed upstairs. Put the headrest under the hole and then go up.

Crescent wrench of armageddon

Go to the castle, take the berries, and then go up and north-west. Use the tort ease on the turtles. Open the book and then go to the bar. Slip the coupon to Bruco and then order a mead lite. Go to the castle barn, give the mead to the oaf, and steal the branch. Burn the branch in the pitch and then melt the wax seal. Take the wax and stick it on the key. Give the impression to the owner of the bar, unlock the door with the new key he gives you, and then win the silly quiz to obtain the wrench.

The raw steak of eternity

Go in and spit. Wait until the boy comes to the front and insults you. Go to the shooting gallery and win all the prizes and then go to the 'folls' (wha-?) pavilion. Sit on the whoopee cushion and then put on the fools cap. Head for the Pavilion of Tomorrow. Pull the shade and take the leech and band. Put the band on the viper, put the bunge cord on the animal, and then take the potty. Wait in the theatre until the jugglers appear. Throw the leech at them and then take their gloves. Wear the gloves and scale the pole outside. Go to the dressing room and Lilly the boa. Head for the guy with the shells and wait until the musician arrives. Give him the reed and then wear his glasses. Play the game and win. Go to the shooting gallery and give the woodcuts to the guy you meet there. Go to the dragon's cave and keeping shooting until you hit its vulnerable spot. Take the dragon, the steak and the ring.

The crowbar of apocalypse

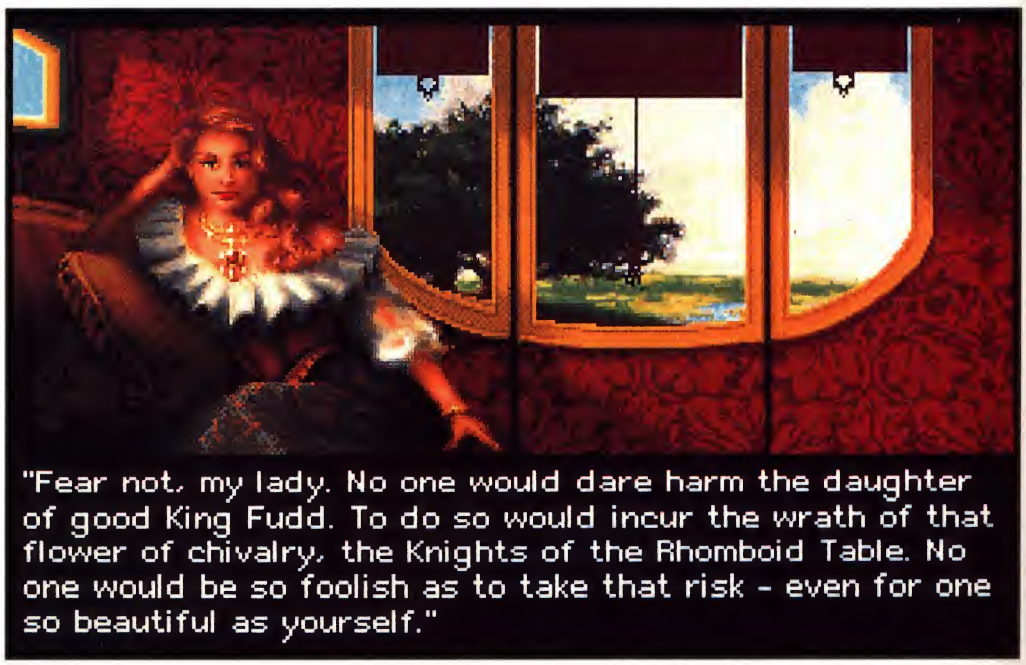
Moon the unicorn and take the leaf. Head in a westerly direction to find the robe. Wear it. Take the newspaper and ring the fourth bell. Give the newspaper to the virgin and then take the hanky and give it to her. Put this on the leaf and then wait until the unicorn enters. Go into the sacrifice room, climb in the vat and wear the ring. Wait, again, until the girl comes in. Exit the vat and take off the ring. Give the book to the virgin and then dart into Molochi's mouth when it opens. Go to the mountain and go west, north, and south. The North Wind will give you a note. Go into the palace and give the note to Clio. Wait until Morty comes for you and give the note to Morty. Exit and steal the costumes. Repeat this procedure but steal the woad instead. Wear both the woad and the costume. Go to the lab, pull the crank, take the slime wig and then head for the library. Wait and then read the list, taking the book with the biggest title. Go to the copying god and give the book to him. Give the tupine to the repair god and then put the penny in the slot. Go to the thick god who's lost his memory and give him the nectar three times and then take the egg. Drop it in the agora. Climb upon it, eat the slimewig, turn around twice, and then squawk. Read the notice about the cakes in the palace. Call the number and wait until you receive the cake. Go to the god of the North Wind and pull the dragon's tail. Burn the candles, then go north, take the key, unlock the lock to the stairs.

The bolt cutters of doom and the raft

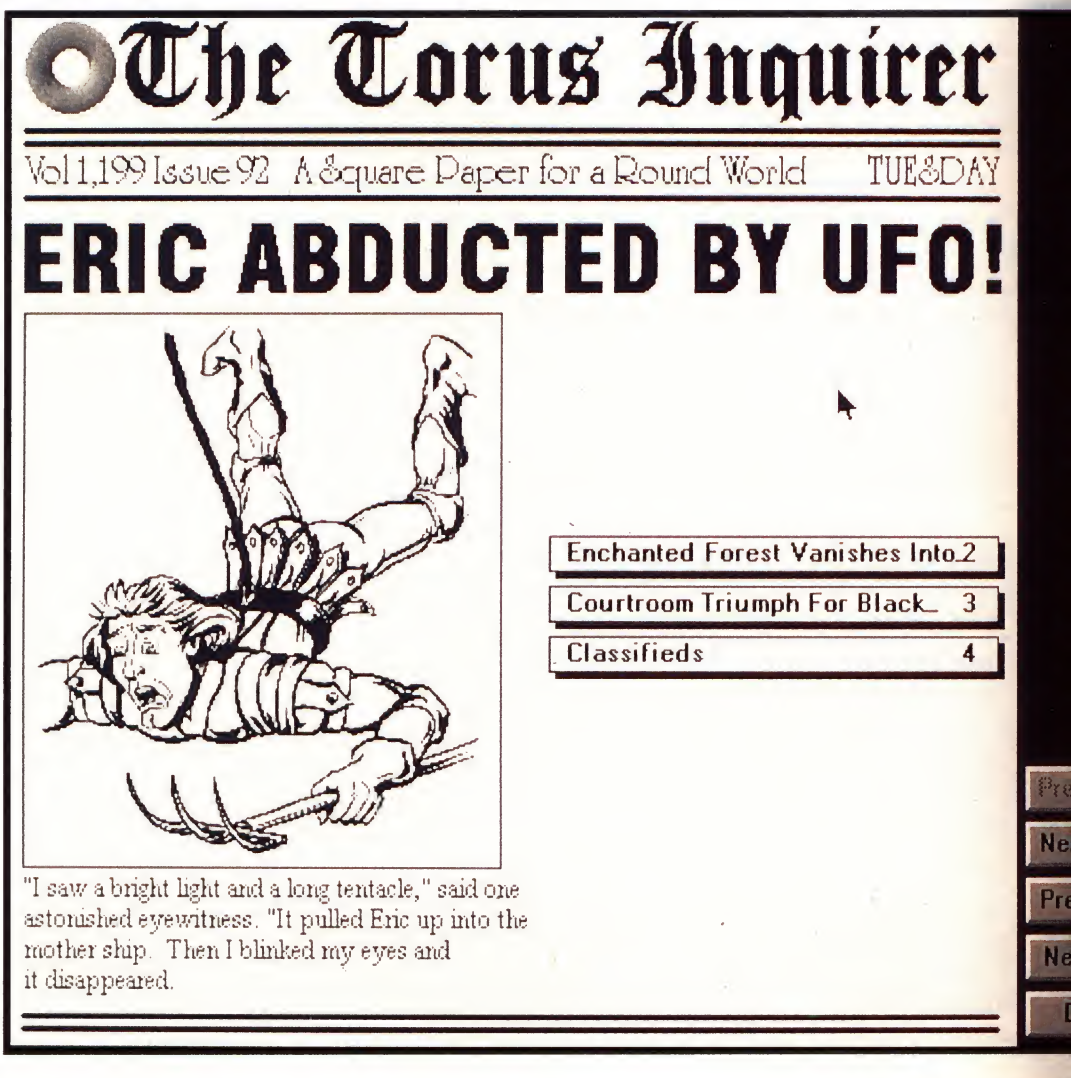
Give the berries to Zulu and then wait until you're at phantasy. Go to Milligan's Island and take the umbrella. Wait until the bottle arrives and then grab it and the matchbook. Join the dots in the matchbook and put it in the bottle. Throw it away and then wait until it comes back. Go to the next island with the conveyer belt. Put the umbrella on it, pull the lever, and then place the dragon on it. Go to the iceberg and then to Monkey Island. Yoohoo a bit and then give the monkey the banana and take the coconut. Make it smaller and then go to the gnoll island and into the playroom. Put the coconut in the chopper and then go to Treasure Island. Go in and answer the daft questions. Place the umbrella and rum in the coconut and give it to the midget.

The castle

Put the pitchfork in the tar and attack the bird with crowbar. Put the steak on the eye, cut the lightning with the bolt cutters, and turn the moon with the wrench. Go in and turn the hourglass. Take the eyeballs and put them in the skull. Hoot and the answer to the question is IIVX. Go through into the bedroom and take the broomstick and make-up. Put the make-up on the chain and then open the window and climb aboard the broomstick. Take the cake and then go to the crawl space and open the trap door. Go up and wait until the chandelier falls and then give the cake to the witch. Take Lorale and get hell out! Blow the whistle and get on the duck. Congrats. You have finished the game. ☞



(Above) Eric The Unready limbers up to use the Crescent Wrench Of Amageddon on an unsuspecting 'lady' who seems to be wearing a dustbin lid with the middle cut out.
(Below) Oh American humour we love it. (That's a sorry excuse for a caption. Ed.)



SPOILED!

FREDDY PHARKAS

Why, Al Lowe, I do declare! I simply can't remember the last time you wrote a game without a huge pair of heaving breasts in it.

ANOTHER SOLUTION from the boy-wonder Thomas Roebuck. Unfortunately, Tom decided to write this solution in 'character', so we had his spelling mistakes in a western American accent. For this reason you may find it hard to follow. Mentions to John Grayson, Mr D.A Addison and P Lake who sent in solutions too late to publish.

Act one

Firstly go into the saloon and take the whisky glass. Go to Moms café and take the can. Go behind the saloon and take the elixir and ice pick. Enter the pharmacy and unlock the door. Slip behind the counter and grab Penelope's prescription. Enter the lab. Put 40ml of pepticlymacine tetrazole in a graduated cylinder. Pour in the medicine bottle and cork. Give it to Penelope. Mom's prescription is harder. Put 15ml of Bismuth Enterosalicyline in a beaker, then add 30g of Phendol Oxtriglychlorate. Put this in a beaker, stir, and then pop in a medicine bottle and cork. Give it to Mom and then I quote, 'Madame Ovaree will come'. To read it you must use the whisky glass. To make it, grind 15g of Bimethyliquidoline and 15g of Metyraphosphate in a mortar. Put 6 medicine papers out and place 5g on each. Give to Ovaree. Give the prep G, which is found on the table, to Smithie. And on to Act two!!

Act two

The Sheriff has closed you down. Nip down to Smithie's. Take the rope, coal and the belt. Use the ice pick on the can, put the coal inside the can, and then wrap the belt around it. Use the gas mask on yourself and grab a bag from Whittling Willy. Use the bag on the horse to collect its fart. Back at the lab, use the elixir on the lamp. Place the spectroscope near the lamp and then use the bag on it. Look up the reading and make the potion. Use it on the troughs.

To get rid of the snails, open the church door and look at the key. Take the key and then give your money to the bar keeper. Use the key on the bottle. Head for the snails (pick up a few and give them to Mom for extra score) and use the beer on the

Pharkas ville – Back to the Future III anybody?

These exterior shots are a bit lovely (he said paddingly).

railroad. Get the ladder from the kids' playground and use it on the anthill to rescue the man. Turn on the tap at the water tower and then use the bottle on the water. Take a swig of the water. Look up diarrhoea in the book. Turn to the drug it refers to and formulate it. Tie the rope in a knot and go back to the water tower. Use the ladder on the tower. Lasso the top, open the hatch, and pour the drug in.

To put out the flames in the office take the baking soda and put it on the see-saw. Get on the swing and then click on Freddy three times to gain momentum, then, when Freddy's legs go up, jump onto the school roof. Jump back onto the see-saw. Head for the brothel and listen to the Sheriff and the Banker talking. Go in and take the naughty French postcards. Look at them and wait until Madame comes in.

Act three

On waking up, open the chest and take the clothes. Open the drawer and take the claim ticket. Go to the graveyard and dig up the grave of Philip D. Graves. Take the key and go to the bank. Give the key to the banker. Take the guns and the neckerchief. Go to Mom's café and get some coffee. Go and see the Sherriff and give him the coffee. Load your pistol and then head for the outside of your pharmacy. Take the dirt and drop this in Mom's café. Slip round and steal the pie. Give this to the sheriff and then use the gun cleaning kit on the gun. Now go to the cemetery. Place the bottles on the post then practice shooting. Then go back to the pharmacy. Take Srini's medallion and give it to Whittling Willy. Go to the church and steal the wax. Go back to the store, take the knife, and use it on the wax. Take the clay from the grave and use it on the wax. Go and see the barber and give him the claim ticket. Return to the pharmacy, go behind, and go up to the work table. Use the medallion on the cup and melt it with the lantern. Melt the wax into the mould and place the molten silver in the mould. Scrape the clay off and use the ear on yourself. Go upstairs and get changed.

Act four

Go to the saloon. Watch the game of poker. When you see Aces' hand shoot up, grab it and then shoot the golden rail around the table. Go to the barber and give him the French postcards. Go to the balcony above the main street. Place the gas canister on the balcony and then go to the brothel. Stand inside the gazebo and shoot the canister. Go up and out and shoot the guys. Shoot the Kid and take the lucky neckerchief and stuff it in your ear. Go and see Penelope. Drop your guns and pick up the slate. Rock the chair (click on the front and back as he leans forward). Get the ear and sharpen it on the floor. Use it on the ropes. Take the sword and fight Penelope. Use the ear on Keney. Fin.

SHADOW OF THE COMET

SPOILED!

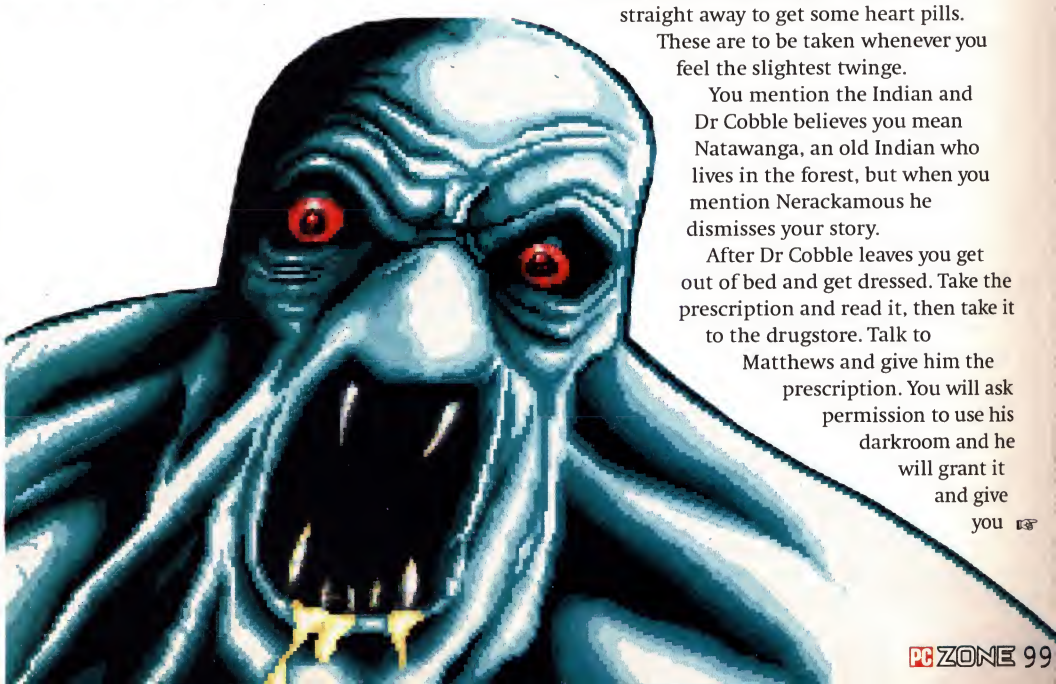
Part Two

DAY TWO

FOLLOWING YOUR ordeal the night before, you recover in the bed in your room. Dr Cobble has been tending to you. He orders you to get some rest, but you reply that this is out of the question. He writes you a prescription and leaves it on the table, telling you that you're running the risk of a heart attack and you must take it to Matthews straight away to get some heart pills. These are to be taken whenever you feel the slightest twinge.

You mention the Indian and Dr Cobble believes you mean Natawanga, an old Indian who lives in the forest, but when you mention Nerackamous he dismisses your story.

After Dr Cobble leaves you get out of bed and get dressed. Take the prescription and read it, then take it to the drugstore. Talk to Matthews and give him the prescription. You will ask permission to use his darkroom and he will grant it and give you ☞



Look buster, I want to see the manager, and I want to see him NOW!

Frankly, I'll never attend another Jehovah's Witness induction course again.

Okay take my money and my valuables, but for pity's sake, leave me my bow tie.

Pfffleeassee giffth mee bakk myy tteeth!

☞ a clue about chemicals. When he has left, go through the door on the left. Get the bottles containing Caustic Soda, Hydroquinine, Benzine Chlorate and Chromogenous. Some are on the table at the back of the room and some are on the shelf above the ladder.

Go through the red drape into the darkroom. Switch the red safelight on by walking into the panel on the back wall by the door. Put all of the plates into the developing tray. Use Caustic Soda and Hydroquinine to develop the plates, and Benzine Chlorate and Chromogenous to fix them.

Once the photographs have been developed, you will switch the main light back on and examine the photos individually. The first two show normal constellations, but the final one shows a pair of evil eyes. The shock makes you drop the plate which shatters and you collapse.

When you come to, Mr Matthews is attending you. He gives you a pill for your heart.

The demise of Jugg

Go outside and you will see Mr Coldstone. Talk to him and you will get clues about his involvement in the strange goings on in the town.

Go to Jugg's house. As you arrive, you will see Wilbur Hambleton leaving. Try the door, but you will find it is locked. Follow Hambleton. He ducks into Myer's shop. When you follow him inside he will drop something on the counter. It is a key. Take it and return to Jugg's house and unlock the door with it.

Inside there are blood stains on the carpets, indicating a struggle and injury. Take the statue of a baby from the table. Go into the second room and look inside the low cabinet. Take the statue of a young man. Go into the long hallway and look in the first butterfly case you come to. Take the statue of the old man from within it.

Go into Jugg's living room. Look under the portion of the rug with a brown line across it and take the small key beneath it. Now look through the books on both sides of the room. Replace *The Old Man of the Sea* with the statue of the old man, *Youth* with the statue of a baby and *The Invisible Man* with the statue of the young man. The book case will slide to one side revealing a secret room.

Inside the room, Jugg is lying on the floor bleeding badly. Talk to him and he will tell you it is too late for him, but he can still be of some use. Give him the parchment. He will interpret it for you and tell you about Cthulu and what you must do to stop the return of the old gods to Earth. He refers you to the Necronomicon and a note on his desk and then he dies.

Get the Necronomicon and use the small key to open it, then read it. Get the message and put the Necronomicon back.

Of indians and post offices

Leave the house. There will be people out hunting around for you, so don't use the map to find your way back to your lodgings. Instead, go north, north, west and north to get back safely. Go to your bedroom and read the message to get a clue about what to do next.

Go back outside where you'll meet Jed. Decline his offer of a drink until later. Go to the post office (it is safe to use the map again now). Talk to Miss Guildchrist. When she mentions Indians, say: 'As for savagery... '

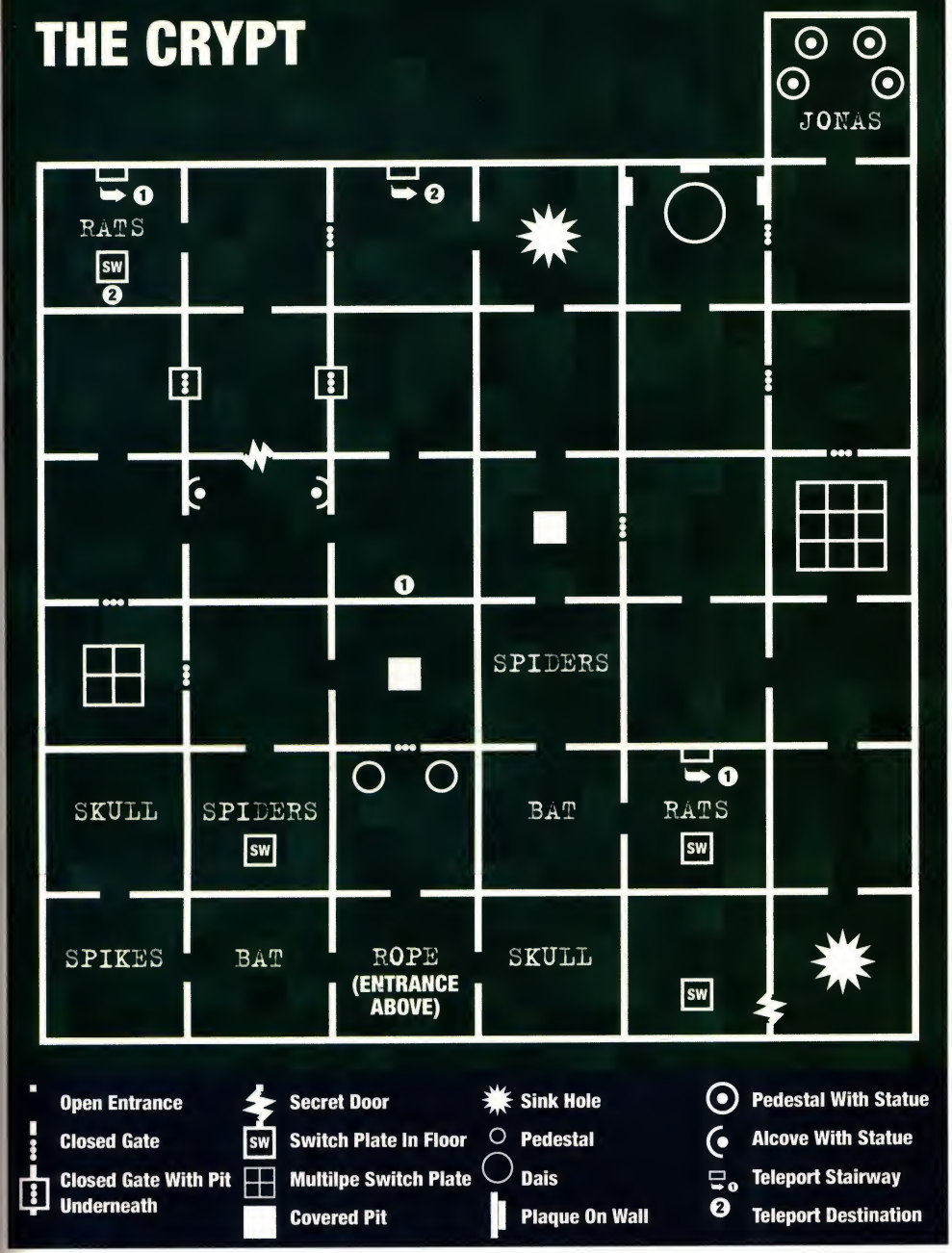
Go through the door to Mr Underhouse's apartment. Talk to Mr Underhouse. He will invite you to consult the map of the region. When you do so he tells you about the curse on the town and the strange practices taking place. He tells you that the background is in a diary kept in the mayor's safe and advises you try and read it.

Go to Myer's shop. Talk to him and say: 'I'll take everything' to buy a brooch, locket and new set of photographic plates.

Breaking and entering with a bible

Go back to the post office and talk to Ms Picott twice. Say: 'Please forgive my behaviour...' When she refuses to give you her bible, give her the locket and she will change her mind. Read the bible and

THE CRYPT



find the passage that refers to the number of the beast. Note down the page number.

Go to the town hall. Bishop is outside. Talk to him and he will tell you he'll meet you later. Go in through the main entrance of the town hall. The clerk will admonish you for interrupting his rest period. In the ensuing conversation, your responses should be: 'I simply want a few words with the mayor.', 'I don't want to bother you, but... ' and 'No, I'm the reporter.'

This will gain you admission to the mayor's office, so climb the stairs and go through the door. Look at the tall cabinet with the painted panel. It opens to reveal a safe. Look at the safe and enter 345 as the combination. Get the diary and the cigar case. Read the diary to get a background to the events in Illsmouth. You will then put the diary back in the safe.

Shedding some light on the problem

Go back to the post office. Unscrew the cigar case to reveal a deposit note. Give this to Miss Guildchrist. She will give you a package intended for Mr. Hambleton with a robe inside. Go up to see Mr Underhouse and talk to him.

Go to the well and stand behind it. Open the parcel and then wear the frock. Walk right to the gate guarded by henchmen. When they address you, say: 'Grumph... ' Wait till they leave and go through the gate to the lighthouse. Walk up the steps and on to the platform where you will take your frock off.

Throw the rope ladder up to nearest window and climb up it and into the lighthouse. You will climb the stairs to the very top. Soon some men will follow you and try to break through onto the upper balcony to capture you.

Examine the steel door, which will open to reveal a pair of wings. Take these then look at the small door to reveal a candle, which you will also require. Put the candle on the floor and use the magnifying glass to light it. Use the lit candle to drip wax on the wings to strengthen them. Then use the wings to glide off the lighthouse and escape.

Dead easy bit

You will glide over the town and land in a clearing in the forest. The gypsies are there. When they have finished talking, go and talk to the fortune teller. She will show you a vision in her crystal ball in which Boleskine appears to you and gives you another history lesson and more clues as to what to do next.

Go back to town. It is now night. Go to the drugstore where you will meet Bishop. Talk to him, and when he asks if you have heard the news, say: 'No, what is it?', then, 'It's horrible'. Talk to him again to get the cemetery key.

Go to the cemetery and use the key to unlock the gate. Proceed straight up the middle path and get the rope from the barrow. Now go to the right path and get the bar from one of the gravestones about halfway along.

Go to the top of the path and enter the crypt. Use the bar to lever open the grille, then tie the rope to the top and descend into the chamber below.

Tales from the crypt

Refer to the diagram when navigating through the crypt and follow these directions:

1. Go west, avoiding the bat.
2. Go west again, avoiding the spikes that appear from the floor.
3. Go north and pick up the skull.
4. Go back to the chamber you started in.
5. Go east and pick up the second skull.
6. Go west, then north and place the skulls on the pedestals to open the gate.
7. Go north, avoiding the pit that lies the middle of the room.
8. Go west.
9. Go south, avoiding the spiders and walk over the floor switch to open the gate in the room to the north.
10. Go north, then west.
11. Step on the panels in this order: SE, NE, NW, SW, to open the gate.
12. Go north, then west, and swap over the statues in the alcoves. This will open a secret door in the north wall.
13. Go north twice.
14. Go west, avoiding the rats and step on the switch plate to open the gate in the room to the east.
15. Go through the teleport stairway.
16. Go west, north, north and east.
17. Go east, avoiding the sink hole in the middle of the room.
18. Go south.
19. Go south again, avoiding the pit in the middle of the room.
20. Go south, avoiding the spiders.
21. Go south, avoiding the bat.
22. Go east, avoiding the rats and step on the switch plate to open the gate, three rooms earlier.
23. Go through the teleport stairway.
24. Make your way back to the room with the pit and the gate, which is now open.
25. Go east, south, east and south.
26. Go south and walk close to the sink hole without falling in. This will cause a secret door to open in the west wall.
27. Go west and walk over the switch plate to open another gate in a later room.
28. Go east, avoiding the sink hole, north, north and north again.
29. Step onto the switch plates in this order: S, E, N, W, SW, SE, NE, NW. This will open the gate.
30. Go north and west, through the gate which is now open.
31. Go north and walk alternately clockwise and anti-clockwise around the dais until the gate finally opens.
32. Go east and then north. At last you are now in Jonas' chamber. ☞

Let's see 5.34761+π/√2^(x∑4.5≈0.4321)∫y or was that 5.44761... oh shit!

Peter was beginning to think that this computer dating wasn't such a great idea.

Tacky as it was, Wendy never tired of demonstrating her static globe to new friends.

Can you tell me where the AGM of the society for the preservation of phallic symbols is please?

☞ As soon as you come into Jonas' chamber, grab the four statues off the pedestals and run back out again, keep running, avoiding hazards, all the way back to the rope and climb up it. When you reach the top of the rope you will be rescued by Mrs Webster and her son.

In for the kill

The Websters take you back to their house in the cemetery, and Walter gives you your tripod back. Mrs Webster takes you inside and talks about her husband John's findings and what is happening in the town. You must identify the four families involved. They are Arlington, Hambleton, Coldstone and Tyler.

Together you look for a drawing of their sign. Look behind the painting and it will fall out. Look at it to find out what it is. Talk to Mrs Webster again for a final hint.

First go to the mayor's house and walk to the barn to the left. Mayor Arlington will confront you. Use the first statue and say the words: 'Iae Yog Thu Sot'. Arlington will scream and a star will appear on the wall at the top of the barn. Climb up the rope and put the first statue on it. Arlington will collapse and tentacles will explode from his body. Jonas begins to wither.

Now go to Tyler's house. He will appear as you approach. Use the second statue and say: 'Rla Gna Has Tep'. A star will appear in front of his door. Place the second statue on it. Tyler will become a ghost and then dissolve away. Jonas will be weakened further.

Go to Coldstone's house. He will come out to meet you. Use statue three and say: 'Ngh Hlu Khu Wig'. A star appears on the left wall of the house. Place the third statue on it and Coldstone will explode. Jonas will become very weak.

The final conflict

Go to the south side of Myer's shop. A black cat will run off. Look in the bin and you'll find a rotten fish. Take this to the location on the left and then come back to the outside of the shop. The cat will have reappeared. Approach it until it runs off and then use the rotten fish to entice it back, so you can pick it up.

Go east, north, east, east, south and west to reach the house with the sleeping dog. Release the cat to start the dog barking and distract the Hambleton brothers, then run back the way you came, but instead of going back to the shop, go south to the Hambleton's house and quickly sneak inside.

Look in the small chest to the left and get the compass card. Get the lantern from the stool to the right. Stand facing the ship's wheel at the end of the room and use the compass card to turn it. This will open a secret door to the right.

Go up the stairs. In the room at the top avoid walking across or near the bearskin rug or you will fall through the floor and die. Put the lantern on the mantelpiece to match the one already there and a secret door will open to the right.

Go up the stairs into the observatory. Look twice in the cabinet near the telescope to reveal a handle. Take this and use it on the telescope and three levers will appear from beneath the floor. Pull the lever underneath the chandelier and an orb will drop into your hands. Place this in the bottom right corner of the astronomical chart and a secret door will open to the right.

Go through the door into a dilapidated attic. Use the fourth statue and say: 'Tho Nya Cht Tur'. The Hambletons will materialise from the walls and the toy boys will grab you and drag you over to the sacrificial pedestal. Use the fourth statue on the pedestal while Wilbur Hambleton draws a knife to kill you. The Hambletons will combine and turn into one horrible ethereal creature before dissolving away.

Run quickly back through the house and outside before you are caught in the fire. Jonas will dissolve away in his chamber. You collapse outside the house. This is the end of the second day. Z

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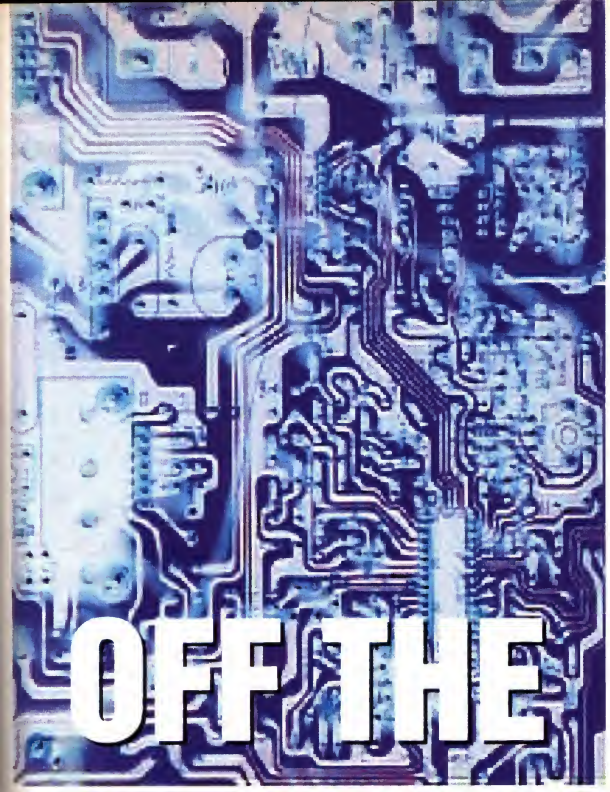


Bipbop - Breakout with a twist.

BIPBOP

AND HERE'S another *Breakout* version. Instead of bricks, you hit blocks with Roman numerals. As you hit them the number decreases and the blocks disappear when the number reaches zero. The paddle can also fire bullets which can deflect the ball. Various nasties (such as goblins) and goodies (like power ups) as you progress. Written by D. Stuart Riffle for S & M Software it needs VGA/MCGA and 512K free RAM. Supports mouse, keyboard and joystick. Registration ($20.00) brings more levels and features.

Mark Burgess goes back to the '70s with a look at some shareware variants on arcade classics and back to the '60s with some psychedelic maths.

(Right) Lamprey Drones closing in.

XERIX

PUBLIC DOMAIN from Brendan Reville who is a 15 year old from Sydney. It's a horizontal scrolling shoot 'em-up with some nice touches. A good soundtrack includes digitised speech. Nothing special, but better than games like *Starfire*.

Needs VGA or MCGA, 500K free on disk, 10MHz or faster and 286 or higher. Supports keyboard, joystick and mouse, Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib and EMS/XMS. Comes with a good installation program.

STELLAR DEFENCE

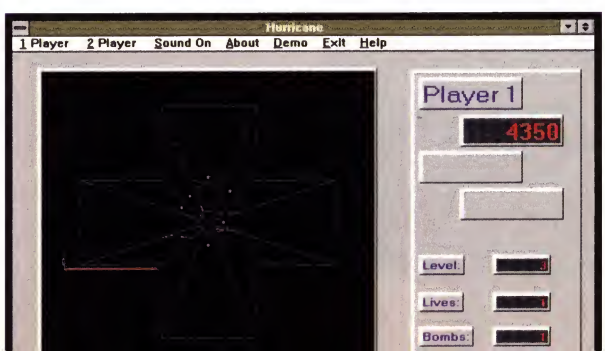
IN THIS GAME you pilot a Largian starfighter and your mission is to clear the spaceways between starbases of Varian ships and asteroids. This gives it away, of course. The program is another version of *Asteroids*, although a good one. There are about 30 different types of Varian ship, and some of them are very tough indeed. When you get to the starbase you can refuel and re-equip. You get money, depending on how many ships you destroyed, and this can be used to buy more powerful weapons. The controls are a bit sluggish and the game lacks excitement.

The unregistered version has only one galaxy – and hence one starbase. Registration costs from $10.00 - $30.00 depending on how many galaxies you want (the maximum is five). Needs AT or better, 565K free base RAM (610K for sound) and 256K VGA card. From Giant Toad Software.

(Right) Avoid spikes! Golly it's Tempest.

HURRICANE

FIRST *Asteroids* and now this. This is a Windows version of the arcade classic *Tempest*. The trouble is that *Hurricane* is slow and bits of it just don't work. Perhaps it will improve in later versions or, better still, inspire someone to produce a good DOS version – there used to be a good version for the old Amstrads.



***Xerix, Stellar Defence* and *Hurricane* were downloaded from Compuserve using the shareware program *WigWam for CIS. Bip Bop* was supplied by PCIUG (0732 771512).**

FRACTALS

CHAOS HAS BECOME A buzz word. What is it really about? Chaos is a shorthand way of describing what were previously known as aperiodic or non-linear phenomena. Such things as the onset of turbulence or the eccentricity of a pendulum. Points when a linear equation ceases to hold good and an entirely new model must be constructed. When things, in fact, disintegrate into chaos. The word was first coined in a paper by James Yorke (Yorke, J & Li, T – Y (1975) Period Three Implies Chaos *American Mathematical Monthly 82* 985-92)

Fractals is a word coined by the mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot to describe shapes that are irregular and fragmentary. Standard Euclidean geometry describes shapes that are ideal in the Platonic sense. These include lines, triangles and cones. Natural shapes such as a leaf or a coastline are not so easy to describe mathematically. 'Clouds are not spheres', Mandelbrot wrote in his book; 'Mountains are not cones, coastlines are not circles and bark is not smooth... Nature exhibits not simply a higher degree but an altogether different level of complexity.'

CONFUSION AND LIGHT (frcal035.arj 318,464)

AN EXCELLENT PD program from Timothy Harris of Plymouth. *CaL* runs on any PC, although 386 is recommended, and will run on all graphics displays from CGA to SVGA. It's relatively fast at drawing and comes with a library of 15 fractals as well as the option for you to define your own formulae. The program is good on the mathematics, making a complex (feeble maths joke) subject easy to understand. Mouse driven and very user friendly – apart from the save option, which can be daunting. £2.20 gets you the latest version.

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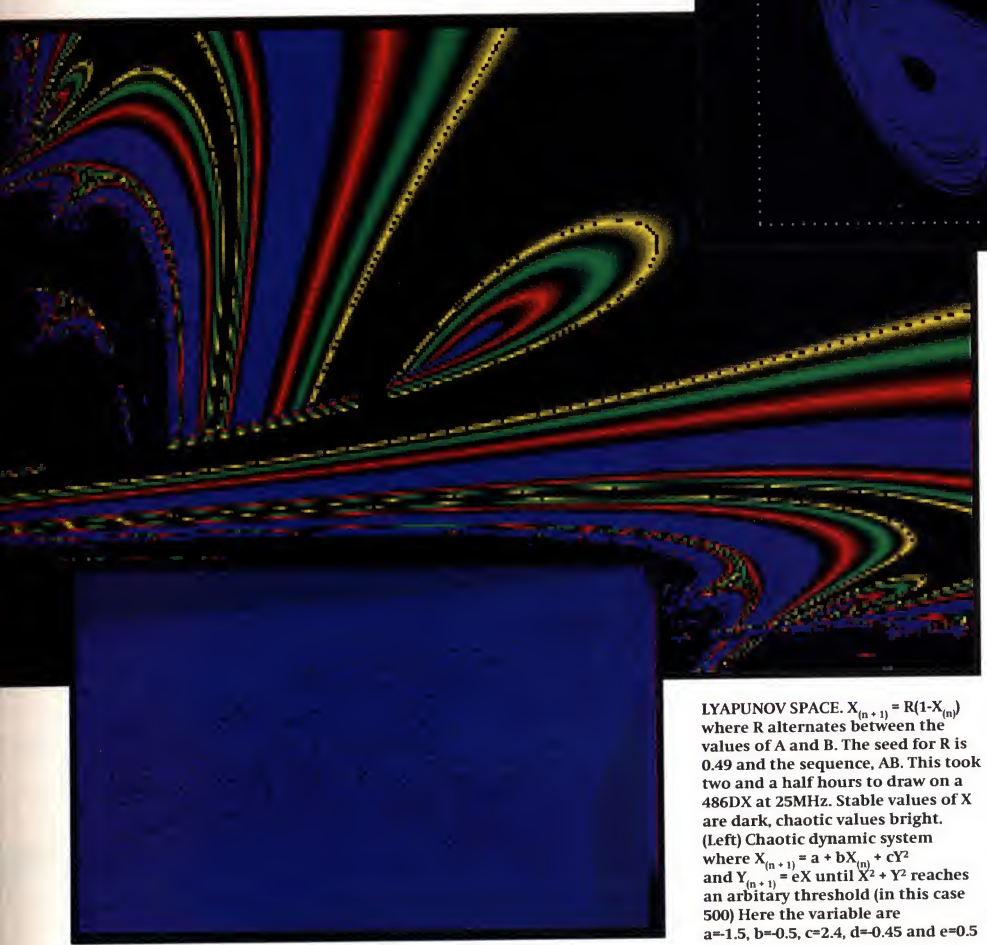
here a=6, b=15, c=1 and ∂t (time step)=0.02



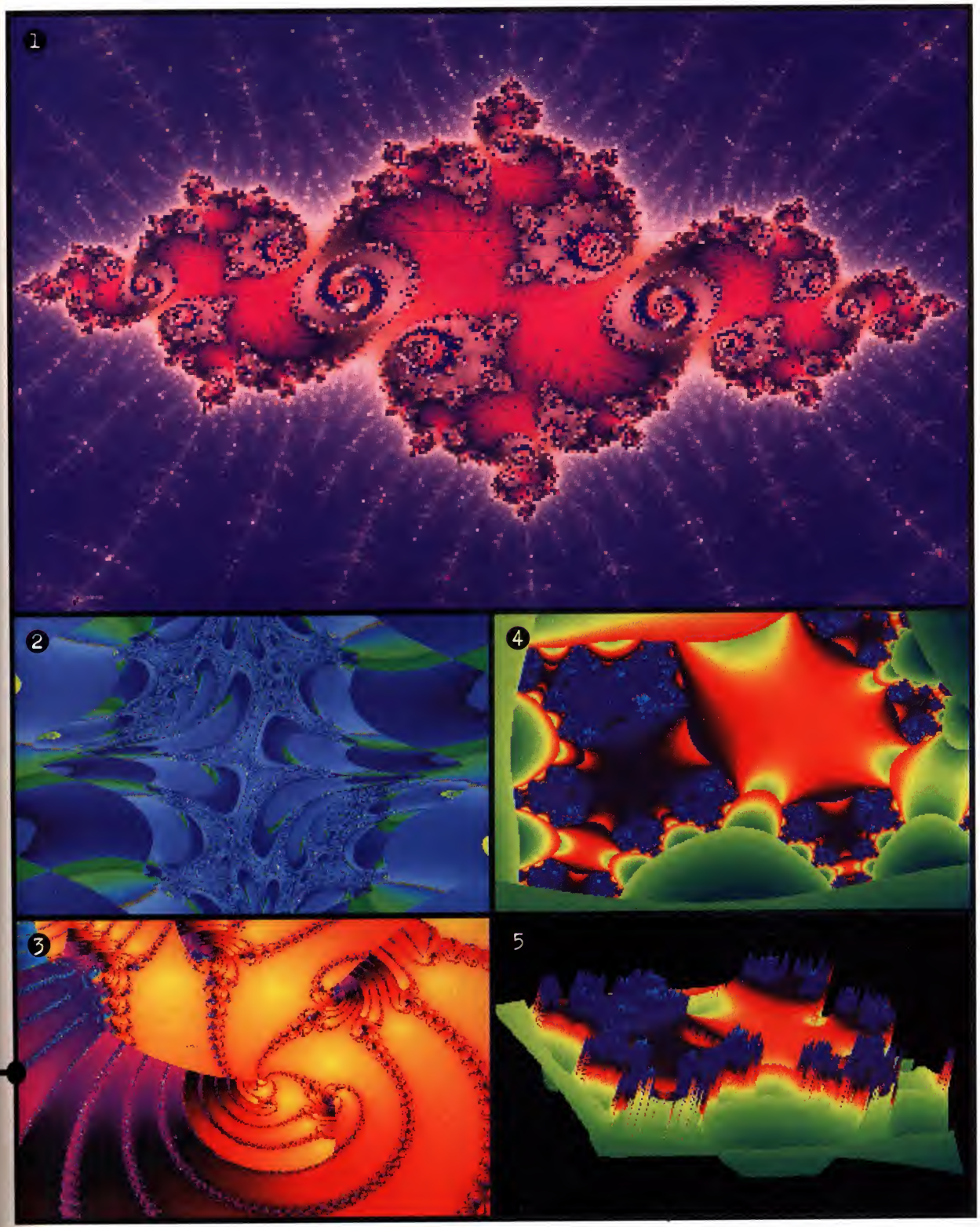
LYAPUNOV SPACE. $X_{(n+1)} = R(1-X_{(n)})$ where R alternates between the values of A and B. The seed for R is 0.49 and the sequence, AB. This took two and a half hours to draw on a 486DX at 25MHz. Stable values of X are dark, chaotic values bright. (Left) Chaotic dynamic system where $X_{(n+1)} = a + bX_{(n)} + cY^2$ and $Y_{(n+1)} = eX$ until $X^2 + Y^2$ reaches an arbitary threshold (in this case 500) Here the variable are a=-1.5, b=-0.5, c=2.4, d=-0.45 and e=0.5

FRACTINT (fraint.exe 483,732)

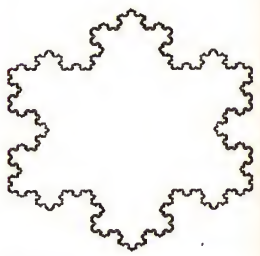
THE GRANDFATHER of all fractal programs. Never mind 'must have' this is a program that is worth buying a PC for. It is now in version 18 and shows no signs of flagging. The secret is in the way the program smoothly emulates inherently floating point operations with integer mathematics. If you have a maths co-processor (and it's worth buying one just for this) the program flies like a bird. Beautifully written in C with the program and source code both in the public domain.

With *Fractint* there are eight different ways to make 3D displays of your fractals each with five viewing and three stereo options. You can save screens in .GIF format and do just about anything else you want. I've had *Fractint* in one form or another for five years (since v 2.1 in 1988) and am still nowhere near exhausting its possibilities. The last time I printed out the manual was v 15.1 and it ran to over a hundred pages. On-Line help was a feature from v 16 onwards.

The masses of on-line help amounts to what is almost a full



1. The Julia set for $\lambda fn_{(z)}$ where λ and z are complex.
2. The Julia set for $z_{(n+1)} \cos z_{(n)} + z_{(n)}^2$
3. Complex Newton where z and n are complex numbers.
4. $z_{(n+1)} \cosh z_{(n)} + z_{(n)}^2$
5. The same after 3D transform.



(Above) The Koch Curve where the infinite series 3 x 4/3 x 4/3 x 4/3... defines an infinitely long line of dimension 1.2618 (log 4/log 3) enclosing a finite area.
(Below)
$z \rightarrow \left(\frac{z^{2+}(c-1)}{2x+(c-2)}\right)^2$

course on the world of fractals. I can't speak too highly of this program. It's written in C by Bert Tyler and a cast of thousands. Freeware.

FRACXTRA

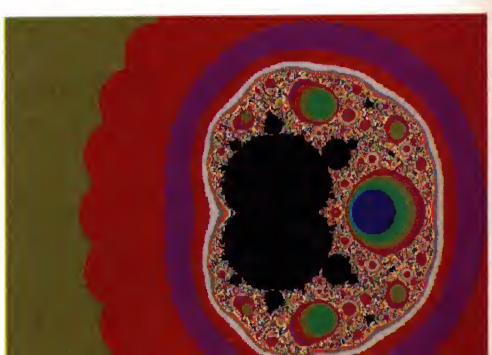
This is a set of extras for *Fractint* including extra .MAP, .PAR and .FRM files. The Omicron disk (DOS046) also comes with *Partobat 3.0*, a program that generates batch files form Fractint .PAR files. PD/Freeware.

FRACTINT GUIDE

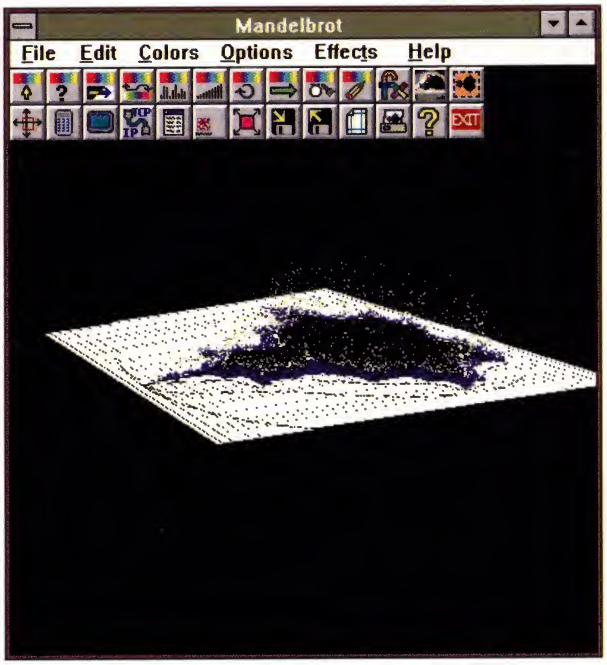
Another add-on disk from Omicron, this contains a guide to using *Fractint* together with a program to generate IFS (Iterated Function System) .PAR files and *Anifra 1.0*, a utility that produces .PAR and .BAT files to animate your fractals.

WINFRACT (winfra173.zip 488,696)

THIS STARTED life as a straight port of *Fractint* by Bert Tyler but now has extensive on-line help, batch files and so on. Runs nearly as fast as the DOS version which, however, remains the standard. The source code is available from Omicron on disk (WIN054). Omicron have several interesting fractal programs for Windows, I'll review them by disk.



(Far right) Lissajou figure.
(Right) Mandelbrot for Windows – the famous Mandelbrot set:
$z_{(n+1)} = z_{(n)}^2 + c$

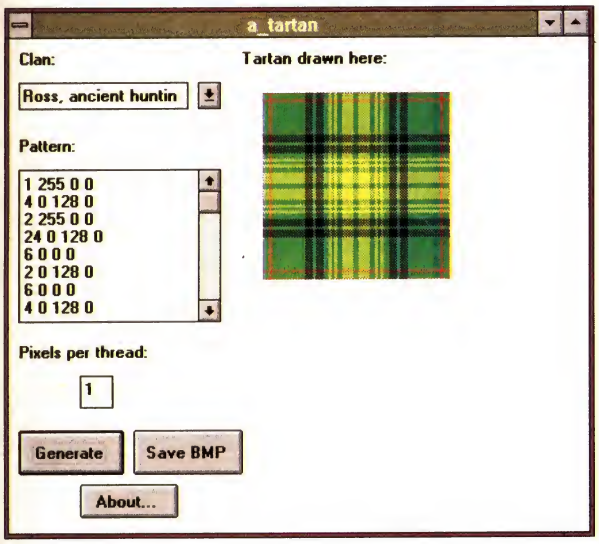


WIN408

MANDELBROT FOR WINDOWS V 3.0 is a fast Mandelbrot set generator. An excellent tool bar controls colour palette selection and animation and special effects that include perspective, 3D and edge tracing. Good help file. Shareware (registration $25.00) by Phillip Crews.

FRACTAL POSTER MAKER V 1.1 calculates the Mandelbrot set from any point and prints it out to make a giant poster. Shareware (registration $5.00) by Shawn Pourchot.

LISSAJOU recreate the famous oscilloscope patterns and use them as Windows screen savers. It's important to read the READ.ME file otherwise you'll install it incorrectly and wonder why it doesn't work (this happened to a friend of mine you understand). Freeware by Huw Millington. Registration of £5.00/$10.00 gets you the source code.



(Above) Tartan.
(Below) Chaos for Windows – the Mandelbrot set.

WIN 214

FRACTREE V 1.0 creates random trees. Lots of parameters to play around with and tremendous fun. Freeware by Darrel Blain.

A_TARTAN is included by special request of the production editor, Kirsty. This intriguing bit of freeware (the program, not Kirsty) draws tartans which you can then save as Windows .BMP files. Five tartans are supplied and a very good help file shows you how to create your own. By James Russell.

FRACTAL GENERATOR V 1.03 generates the Mandelbrot set. You can change the co-ordinates. Shareware (registration $15.00) by Stefan Tucker.

FRACVIEW V1.02 is another program that displays the Mandelbrot set (I blame it all on a book called *Fractal Programming in C*). Here you can zoom into the set, but you can't choose where. Shareware by Eric Bergman-Terrell; registration ($5.00) brings the source code.

CELAUTO by G. J. Vass displays cellular automata in accordance with six rules (not *Life*). Most are pseudo-Brownian motion. No documentation. Freeware.

FRACDEMO is a MDI (Multiple Document Interface) fractal generator of Mandelbrot, Julia, cubic and test functions. Written by Olivier Bornot, registration is an amazing $50.00 and gets you the source code. Wow.

WIN 509

FRACTAL PAINT V 1.4 is a strange drawing package that incorporates fractals amongst the standard drawing tools. Draw or generate fractal images, landscapes etc. and transfer to clipboard. Good manual. Shareware from ComputerSmith, registration $25.00.

WINFERN V 1.0 is a program that draws ferns. Public Domain from René Schuchter.

CHAOS FOR WINDOWS is a beautiful fractal generator by Chuck Lindgren. It draws M-set, Julia and Dragon types and has lots of palette options. Shareware, registration $15.00.

ISLAND V 2.1 is a nice landscape generator from David Gillespie (freeware).

NORNER V 2.0 takes its name from the sinister weavers of Norse mythology. The program generates a Mandelbrot set for any combination of 6 trig, 3 math and 9 exponential functions. Easy to use zoom, variable speed plotting. The help file is a good introduction to fractals. By Gary Vass.

CHAOS GENERATOR V 1.3 Freeware from Bryan Woodruff this generates Lorenz and Pickover orbits. Includes code.

FRED'S FRACTALS V 1.2 displays some rather lovely IFS fractals; PD from Fred McLain.

KAL V 1.00B is a kaleidoscope for windows from Clinton Parker. Registration of $10.00 gets you a version where you can change the settings.

MANDELBROT V 1.2 Is a good freeware Mandelbrot generator from Robert Epps. As you zoom in, the previous images remain behind the current window.

POOL V 1.0 Pool? What has that got to do with chaos? The program models pool ball trajectories – as if there were no such thing as friction. A chaos program inasmuch as minor variations in the starting point makes a huge difference.

TRICHAOS V 3.0 draws a Sierpinski gasket and is freeware form Marty Belles. Includes code.

TERMITE V 1.0 is one of the weirdest programs I've seen for a long time. It models a termite nest that behaves like a Turing machine (i.e., a universal computer). Very strange: I suggest you read the Computer Recreations column of *Scientific American* Sept. 1989 – on which this program is based – to find out more. PD from Hans Keller.

BOOK ZONE

GLEICK, J (1988). CHAOS, MAKING A NEW SCIENCE. WILLIAM HEINEMANN LTD LONDON.
A non-technical and unpatronising account which captures the thrill of a new branch of science.

HALL, N (ED.) 1992. NEW SCIENTIST GUIDE TO CHAOS. PENGUIN LONDON.
Collection of articles on Chaos from the *New Scientist*. A general guide to principals and applications.

LAUWERIER, H (1991). FRACTALS, IMAGES OF CHAOS. PENGUIN LONDON.
Good introduction to the mathematics of the subject.

MANDELBROT, B B (1982). THE FRACTAL GEOMETRY OF NATURE. FREEMAN NEW YORK.
Expensive, encyclopaedic, exasperating and absolutely essential – an expansion of the original 1977 work.

STEVENS, R T. FRACTAL PROGRAMMING IN C. M & T BOOKS CALIFORNIA ISBN 1-55851-037-0 (1-55851-038-9 WITH DISK).
Painless introduction to programming your own fractals. About £28.75 (book only).

STEVENS, R T. ADVANCE FRACTAL PROGRAMMING IN C. M & T BOOKS CALIFORNIA ISBN 1-55851-096-6.
For people who know their C. A book to give Mr Cursor the willies. About £22.95.

STEWART, I (1990). DOES GOD PLAY DICE? PENGUIN LONDON.
Another good introduction from a mathematician who goes easy on the technical side.

WAITE GROUP (1991). FRACTAL CREATIONS. THE WAITE GROUP PRESS ISBN 1-878739-05-0.
From the people who wrote Fractint – so if they don't know, no one does. Difficult to get over here – try Dillons, Waterstones and the Science Museum.

WAITE GROUP (1991). THE WAITE GROUP'S FRACTALS FOR WINDOWS. THE WAITE GROUP PRESS ISBN 1-878739-25-5.
The complete guide to Winfract. I've not seen it in this country.

There are several popular books on fractals and chaos but a great many of them are 'cuttings jobs' put together by mathematically illiterate journalists or New Age book factories. Avoid.

All Fractal and Windows programs were supplied by Omicron Systems (0702 710391).

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HITACHI 3700Y	£410	300	150	✓	-	64K	✓	-
PHILIPS 462M	£349	350	175	✓	✓	32K	-	✓
TOSHIBA 3401B	£499	200	375	✓	✓	64K	✓	✓
NEC MULTISPIN 84	£409	280	300	✓	✓	256K	✓	✓
PANASONIC CR562B	£334	320	300	✓	✓	64K	✓	✓
PHILIPS 215	£329	360	175	✓	✓	64K	✓	✓
SONY CDU 31A	£395	550	150	✓	✓	64K	-	✓

All of these drives are internal and include an interface card except the Toshiba 3401B. This internal drive does not include an interface and is priced at an SRP of £499.

Kodak Access Software CD extra - see left for software details

PACKAGE OPTIONS

In addition to supplying the Mitsumi CD-ROM Drive on its own for £149+VAT, Silica Systems also offer the Mitsumi Drive packaged with either KODAK ACCESS or GRAPHICS WORKS software on CD (details below). See bottom right for pack pricing.

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The Kodak Access software application is Kodak's official PhotoCD software title. With it you can select, view and manipulate photographs which have been stored using Kodak's PhotoCD technology.

- View Stored Photographs
- Crop & Resize Images
- Rotate & Flip Pictures
- Export to Other Programs
- Change Colours

GRAPHICS WORKS

Graphics Works from Micrografx® provides all of the functions found in Kodak Access, PLUS the ability to edit images or existing photographs, apply special effects and then save them in other formats. Also supplied are three extra programs which allow you to create presentations, edit logos, or use one of the 10,000 supplied images in your own applications!

SOFTWARE FEATURES COMPARISON	KODAK ACCESS	GRAPHICS WORKS
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FLIP AND ROTATE IMAGES	✓	✓
EXPORT TO: BMP, TIFF, JPEG FORMATS	✓	✓
IMPORT FROM OTHER APPLICATIONS	–	✓
SPECIAL VISUAL EFFECTS: BLUR, EMBOSS ETC	–	✓
TEXT HANDLING	–	✓
BITMAP DRAWING TOOLS	–	✓
VECTOR DRAWING TOOLS	–	✓
LOGO CREATION	–	✓
PAINTING TOOLS - BRUSH ETC.	–	✓
ALSO SUPPLIED:		
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WIPE AND FADE BETWEEN IMAGES	–	✓
WINDOWS DRAW PACKAGE INCLUDED	–	✓
VECTOR BASED DRAWING	–	✓
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CD-ROM is a storage technology for large amounts of information, which can be accessed from a PC via a CD-ROM drive. CD-ROM technology uses Compact Discs (CDs) as its information storage medium. These disks can store high resolution colour images, millions of words, full audio sound tracks and much, much more.

THE CD-ROM ADVANTAGE

There are numerous advantages in having a CD-ROM drive. CDs can hold the equivalent of up to 600 floppy disks and software developers can design more sophisticated and complex programs to take advantage of this large storage capacity. Cheap production costs, compact design and the practically indestructible nature of CDs also makes them ideal for software storage.

KODAK PHOTOCD COMPATIBLE

Kodak have recently introduced a new technology called Kodak PhotoCD. This allows normal photographs from a camera to be stored on CD discs, which can then be viewed on your PC. Photographs can be enhanced or manipulated using KODAK ACCESS or GRAPHICS WORKS software, to give you the results you need for your business presentations or the "family album".

MULTI-SESSION COMPATIBLE

Some applications require that the information written to a CD-ROM is updated on more than one occasion. This involves several or 'multi' sessions of writing to the disc. The Mitsumi is multi-session compatible, which means that it can read all of the information which has been written to a CD in this way. Inferior, single-session CD-ROM drives can only read what was originally written on the first session, not the information added on subsequent sessions.

Applications such as Kodak's PhotoCD use multi-session technology to update CDs with additional photographs. Other users of multi-session technology will include hospitals, who will update individual medical records, plus many other users whose reference information is constantly being updated.

MULTIMEDIA (MPC) COMPATIBLE

The Mitsumi CD-ROM drive is ready for all types of multimedia applications. It is fully compliant with the Multimedia PC (MPC) standard, full compatibility with existing and future multimedia programs.

EASY TO INSTALL AND USE

Slide the Mitsumi drive into a spare 5.25" drive bay, slot the supplied interface card into your PC and run the installation software. The easy to use Mitsumi software will, in nearly all cases, take care of conflicts with other peripherals. Should you wish to change any settings, the interface card and software allow you to do so with the minimum of fuss. And, the Mitsumi has no tiresome caddies or slow electronic mechanisms. Simply slide out the tray, pop-in a CD, press it back and you're ready! It couldn't be simpler.

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At Women's Institute fête's all over the country the victim places his head in the stocks and lets irate villagers lob soggy sponges at him. On *PC Zone* we have a letters page, which serves much the same purpose.

Stars in their eyes

IT ALL BEGAN 'A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away', I was five years old and the first film I went to see at the cinema was *Star Wars*. How I spluttered popcorn over the lady in front when I heard the Tie fighters making their infamous whooshing noises. From then on every *Star Wars* toy, pencil case, bubble bath and piggy bank had to be mine. Then in my early teens I bought a copy of the *Star Wars* RPG. (Please spare me the stereotyped snorey RPG jokes!) At the age of 17 I bought all three *Star Wars* films (the widescreen version). Just before my 18th birthday I acquired a 486SX. Yep! You know what's coming next, thanks to *PC Zone*'s marvellous reviews a copy of *X-Wing* now has pride of place on my hard drive. Surely Lucasfilm should award me some sort of medal for being a complete *Star Wars* junky?

Stephen 'Wedge' Beattie, Arbroath Angus, Scotland.

Sadly yours is an all too familiar case history, mirrored by just about everyone else in this office. I think a medal is out of the question but perhaps we could look into forming some kind of self help group. **Ed.**

No control?

RECENTLY I have been playing *Star Control 2* to death.

I have now completed it but am still itching to get playing it again. I am sure that others are hooked with the game as well. However, when I did complete it and the credits were rolling by at the end, the characters, one after the other, were rambling on and on about a sequel to *Star Control 2*. I presume this would be *Star Control 3*. Please could you check it out with Accolade and possibly find out a release date of some sort.

James Eston, Weston Turville

On no – another Star Control 2 fan. We can quite understand your eagerness to be getting back to the beast. Our very own David 'Feel my Ilwrath' McCandless and Duncan 'Mycon's bigger than yours' MacDonald start jittering and foaming at the mouth every time it disappears from the hard drive to make way for the latest Origin game. In answer to your question though, Accolade tell us that a third Star Control game is almost certainly going to appear, but not in the immediate future. Watch this space! **Ed.**

LETTER OF THE MONTH

CD or not CD, that is the question.

I'm writing to congratulate you on a first rate mag. Some of your humour is a little suspect, but I like Monty Python so who am I to judge. I like your reviews and bum lick and so on ad nauseum *(No please, do go on. Ed.)*, but truthfully, your magazine is like a breath of fresh air after some others. Anyway, the real reason I'm writing to you is to whinge. CD ROMs. *(Is that it? Ed.)*

They (the powers that be) want to make CD ROM the next big thing, but they seem to be shooting themselves in the feet. *The 7th Guest* requires 300 ms access, and costs 70 quid! Well, I guess if they wanted to exclude the bit players, then they've succeeded admirably. Let's face it, the average CD player is inadequate for the game, especially those in an affordable price range. Us poor suckers who've bought machines are definitely not going to upgrade for some time now, even knowing that the game demands such high speeds. I got mine a year and a half or so ago – the fastest drive on the market at the time – a £600 Hitachi with 340ms, 153Kb burst through speed (not the same as sustained speed according to my suppliers Optech, who advised me not to bother buying the game anyway as it would be unacceptably jerky). Am I gutted? You betcha.

How about having compressed data on CDs that is uncompressed once it is in the system memory – it would be spooled onto a hard disk or as much memory as was available.

With rewriteable floppy disks just around the corner, CD games may just be a reed in the wind, and I am not going to buy into a dead end again.

One last thing; does *Strike Commander* work smoothly on a 486DX, or does it require a DX2 to play without jerkiness?

T.F.Paulazzo, Beddington

It's a perennial problem with PCs I'm afraid. You can either risk being at the cutting edge and getting stung every now and then, or you hold back before buying and put up with not being able to play revolutionary new games like The 7th Guest. CD manufacturers are continually engaged in the quest to make them faster. Your compression suggestion would increase the capacity but would probably not help the speed problem that much because the time saved in transferring data would be lost because of the increased processing time needed to decompact the data. With reference to Strike Commander, you can play it on a 486DX but you must be prepared for the action to become slow and jerky when there are lots of objects on screen or you are flying close to the ground. To get maximum enjoyment out of the game, you need a DX2. **Ed.**

Cursor fan

I AM A GREAT fan of Mr Cursor. Why don't you get him to do a contract with 'Vision Express' so he can do one of those ads where he can't find his glasses when they're on his head and it's a good job he popped down to... know what I mean? At least then the nation will not feel urged to jump out of their seats and scream: 'Why is that man so annoying?'

B. Griff, Seabridge, Newcastle

We've passed your suggestion on to Mr Cursor, along with one or two of our own. You are, as far as we know, the first person to have ever felt the urge to jump out of a seat and scream: 'Why is that man so annoying?' **Ed.**

No more special effects

THANK YOU FOR producing a magazine that, at long last, is not taken in by special effects. I had stopped buying magazines because I got fed up of wasting money on games that had been recommended by a reviewer, only to discover that they were little more than a collection of nice graphics and sounds.

When the first issue of *PC Zone* arrived I reluctantly gave it a try, but I've been relieved to find that your reviewers actually know a good game when they play one and are not fooled by pretty graphics that disguise an insubstantial game.

By the way, here's a warning for all those fellow gamesplayers who are planning to buy DOS 6: think twice about installing *DoubleSpace*. It might give you greater disk capacity, but it slows games down and takes up a lot of conventional or high memory. I had so many problems running memory hungry games with it, that I finally got fed up and took it off. The extra space just wasn't worth the hassle.

Andrew Ford, Bournemouth

Micro economics

HELP ME – am I being paranoid, or am I the only person who smells something rotten in the state of games software? I don't buy as many games as I would like to, not because I can't afford them but because I can't justify the expense. I mean, my last gas bill was only £50.00, so I think twice about spending £40.00 on just one game.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not going to generalise and start that old argument about software being a rip-off, but I am puzzled. Surely the number of disks and the size of a manual, packaging and so on, must make a difference to the cost of producing a game. Why then, am I expected to pay exactly the same amount of money for a game that comes on two disks with a thin pamphlet as a I would do for a game with six disks and a 200 page booklet.

Also I'm sure that it costs less to make a CD version of the game which requires one CD than it does to make a disk version that needs ten or 12 floppy disks. So CD software should be cheaper, not more expensive.

Tell me if I'm just being paranoid, but I think that some game producers are taking advantage of the public's ignorance of production costs.

Sandy Howard, Telford

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At last, a 16-bit STEREO PC Sound Card at an affordable price, and with more sound standards than any other sound card. That's just one of the Sound Galaxy range from Silica Systems. The range also includes 8-bit mono and stereo cards with several CD-ROM and sound standard options. Check out the Sound Galaxy cards against the competition in the comparison tables below. Powerful features, coupled with quality manufacture and keen pricing make the Sound Galaxy range a winner. And, every Sound Galaxy PC Sound Card from Silica Systems, comes with a Dynamic Microphone, worth £7.99+VAT FREE OF CHARGE!

8-bit COMPARISON

	MONO			STEREO	
	AZTECH SOUND GALAXY BX II	CREATIVE SOUND BLASTER VERSION 2.0	AZTECH SOUND GALAXY NX II	CREATIVE SOUND BLASTER PRO II	AZTECH SOUND GALAXY NX PRO EXTRA
No Of Sound Standards	2	2	4	3	5
AdLib	●	●	●	●	●
Sound Blaster Version 2	●	●	●	●	●
Sound Blaster Pro II				●	●
Covox Speech Thing			●		●
Disney Sound Source			●		●
FM Synthesiser - OPL2	●	●	●		
FM Synthesiser - OPL3				●	●
Manual Volume Control	●	●	●	●	●
Digital Software Volume Control			●	6 steps	16 steps
Digital Bass & Treble Control			●	●	
Sampling Rate, Recording Up To:	23KHz	15KHz	23KHz	44.1KHz	44.1KHz
Sampling Rate, Playback Up To:	44.1KHz	44.1KHz	44.1KHz	44.1KHz	44.1KHz
Game Port, With MIDI Option	●	●	●	●	●
Dynamic Filtering For Better Sound	●		●		●
CD Audio In	●		●		●
Can Use Microphone And CD During Digital Playback	●		●	●	●
SMT Board For Better Reliability	●		●	●	●
Free Speakers	●		●		●
CD-ROM Interface (AT-Bus)					
Panasonic Interface			●	●	●
Mitsumi Interface					●
Sony Interface					●
CD-ROM Interface (SCSI)					OPTION
Microphone AGC Amplifier	●		●	●	●
Stereo Microphone Input					●
Software Selectable IRQ, DMA & Address Setting Configuration Retained When Power Off			●		●
Mixer Support From More Than One Source During Recording	●		●		●
Built-In Amplifier	●	●	●	●	●
Stereo Lines In And Out				●	●

16-bit COMPARISON

	STEREO				
	AZTECH SOUND GALAXY NX PRO 16	CREATIVE SOUND BLASTER 16 ASP	MEDIAVISION PRO AUDIO SPECTRUM 16	AZTECH BUSINESS AUDIO BOARD	MICROSOFT M'SOFT WINDOWS SOUND SYSTEM
No Of Sound Standards	6	2	2	2	1
AdLib	●	●	●	●	
Sound Blaster Version 2	●	●	●		
Sound Blaster Pro II	●				
Microsoft Windows Sound System	●			●	●
Covox Speech Thing	●				
Disney Sound Source	●				
FM Synthesiser - OPL3	●	●	●	●	●
Digital Software Volume Control	●	●	●	●	●
Digital Bass & Treble Control	●	●	●	●	●
CD Quality Sampling Rate, Record & Playback Up To:	44.1KHz	44.1KHz	44.1KHz	44.1KHz	44.1KHz
Game Port, With MIDI Option	●	●	●		
Dynamic Filtering For Better Sound	●	●	●	●	●
CD Audio In	●	●	●	●	
Can Use Microphone And CD During Digital Playback	●	●	●	●	●
CD-ROM Interface (AT-Bus)					
Panasonic Interface	●	●		●	
Mitsumi Interface	●			●	
Sony Interface	●			●	
CD-ROM Interface (SCSI)	OPTION		●	OPTION	
Microphone AGC Amplifier	●		●	●	●
Stereo Microphone Input	●			●	●
Software Selectable IRQ, DMA & Address Setting Configuration Retained When Power Off	●				
Mixer Support From More Than One Source During Recording	●	●	●	●	●
Option For Upgrade To 16-bit Wave-Table Synthesis	●	●			
Stereo Lines In And Out	●	●	●	●	●

8-bit MONO — 2 SOUND STANDARDS

SOUND GALAXY BXII

- *8-bit Mono Sound Card*
- *2 Sound Standards*
  AdLib, Sound Blaster v.2
- *FREE Speakers*
- *Dynamic Filtering:*
  For Better Sound Reproduction
- *CD Audio In:*
  Direct Audio Connection from your CD-ROM into the Card
- *Mixer Support:*
  Recording and Playback from Multiple Sources
- *Built-In Amplifier*
- *MIDI Interface*
- *FREE Dynamic Microphone from Silica*

FREE! SPEAKERS

8-bit MONO £59

Ref: SOU 1002 +VAT = £69.33

8-bit MONO — 4 SOUND STANDARDS

SOUND GALAXY NXII

- *8-bit Mono Sound Card with CD ROM Interface*
- *4 Sound Standards*
  AdLib, Sound Blaster v.2, Covox Speech Thing, Disney Sound Source
- *FREE Speakers*
- *CD-ROM Interface (Built-In) For:*
  Panasonic Drives
- *Software Configuration Settings in Eeprom:*
  Card Doesn't Reset on 'Power-Off'
- *Software Control of Volume, Bass & Treble*
- *Built-In Amplifier & MIDI Interface*
- *FREE Dynamic Microphone from Silica*

FREE! SPEAKERS

8-bit MONO + CD ROM INTERFACE £79

Ref: SOU 1024 +VAT = £92.83

8-bit STEREO — 5 SOUND STANDARDS

SOUND GALAXY NX PRO EXTRA

- *8-bit Stereo Sound Card with CD ROM Interface*
- *5 Sound Standards*
  AdLib, Sound Blaster v.2, Sound Blaster Pro II, Covox Speech Thing, Disney Sound Source
- *FREE Speakers*
- *CD-ROM Interface (Built-In) For:*
  Panasonic, Mitsumi & Sony Drives - Optional Upgrade to SCSI
- *Software Configuration Settings in Eeprom:*
  Card Doesn't Reset on 'Power-Off'
- *Software Control of Volume, Bass & Treble*
- *Built-In Amplifier & MIDI Interface*
- *FREE Dynamic Microphone from Silica*

FREE! SPEAKERS

8-bit STEREO + CD ROM INTERFACE £99

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16-bit STEREO — 2 SOUND STANDARDS

SOUND GALAXY BUSINESS AUDIO BOARD

- *16-bit Stereo Sound Card with CD ROM Interface*
- *2 Sound Standards*
  AdLib, Microsoft Windows Sound System
- *FREE Headphones & Personal Microphone*
- *Ideal for the Serious Business User*
- *CD-ROM Interfaces (Built-In) For:*
  Panasonic, Mitsumi & Sony Drives - Optional Upgrade to SCSI
- *Software Control of Volume, Bass & Treble*
- *Built-In Amplifier*
- *FREE Dynamic Microphone from Silica*

16-bit STEREO + CD ROM INTERFACE £109

Ref: SOU 1084 +VAT = £128.08

16-bit STEREO — 6 SOUND STANDARDS

SOUND GALAXY NX PRO 16

- *16-bit Stereo Sound Card with CD ROM Interface*
- *6 Sound Standards*
  AdLib, Sound Blaster v.2, Sound Blaster Pro II, MS Windows Sound System, Covox Speech Thing, Disney Sound Source
- *FREE Headphones & Personal Microphone*
- *CD-ROM Interfaces (Built-In) For:*
  Panasonic, Mitsumi & Sony Drives - Optional Upgrade to SCSI
- *Software Configuration Settings in Eeprom:*
  Card Doesn't Reset on 'Power-Off'
- *Software Control of Volume, Bass & Treble*
- *Built-In Amplifier & MIDI Interface*
- *Wave Power Upgrade:*
  Uses an Ensoniq Chip to provide General MIDI Compatibility with 128 Instruments and 32 Note Polyphony
- *FREE Dynamic Microphone from Silica*

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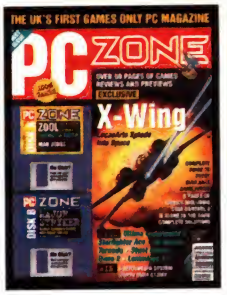

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3

ISSUE 3 Order Ref. AW03A

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BLUEPRINTS Syndicate/Innocent Until Caught/The 7th Guest

4

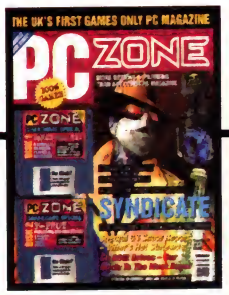
ISSUE 4 Order Ref. AW04A

FREE DISK Space Hulk – 3 missions

REVIEWS Space Hulk/Freddy Pharkas/Eye of the Beholder III/Cohort II/The 7th Guest/Nippon Safes/ Where in Space is Carmen Sandiego?/Sim/Life/Tom Landry/Maelstrom/V For Victory 3: Market Garden

BLUEPRINTS Seal Team/Captive 2/Prince Of Persia 2

5



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BUYER'S GUIDE

SPORTS GAMES

In the immortal words of Chairman Mao, revolution must be a continual process. So last month's assault on the Buyer's Guide was but a small beginning. A spark in the revolutionary process. The breaking of the first window in the Winter Palace. It will only be a matter of time before we've turned the Buyer's Guide into a complete guide to basic ploughing for beginners, rounded up all the programmers and sent them back to the land to discover themselves. The revolution is just a T-shirt away.

The core or infrastructure of the guide remains the same: an up to date and informative look at a category of game. Each game is reviewed and the price and publisher listed. The reviews are based on how the game ranks in the modern world rather than within its own time. After all, having spent 40 quid on a piece of jerky CGA software it's small compensation to know that it was good for its time.

If one of the games grabs your fancy (stop giggling at the back), your best bet is to nip down to your local software shop, hand over the old sponduliks and run through the streets screaming 'It's mine all mine', until you get mugged. Alternatively, if the game is unobtainable, or if you find shop assistants intimidating and are the sort of person who goes into Dixons to buy some batteries only to come out with a complete midi system, then simply look up the publisher's number in the 'phone list down on the right. Most publishers have a mail order department which saves you the hassle of walking down the street and dealing with real people. (People, yuk! Nasty, dirty, noisy things.)

What's new this month is VersionWatch: a summary of current upgrades and bug fixes for a whole host of current games. All this and the chance to win some software. Buyer's Guide – the most crammed pages in town.

Yes, it's true. You have the opportunity to win a copy of *4D Sports Boxing* on page 118.

PHONE LIST

Here we have possibly the most scintillating bit of the Buyer's Guide: the 'phone list. You'll notice that many of the numbers are the same, but don't worry, it's not a misprint, many of these companies are distributed through another company in the UK, and where this is the case we've printed the number of the distributor, and the name of the distributor in brackets. Happy 'phoning.

360 (Electronic Arts) 0753 549442
Access (US Gold) 021 6253388
Accolade 081 8770880
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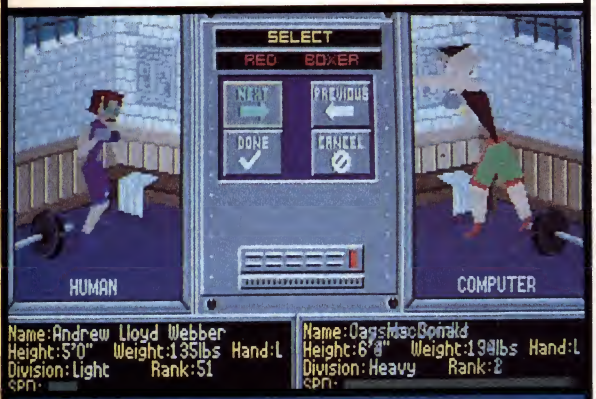
GAME OF THE MONTH



4D SPORTS BOXING (Mindscape, £19.99)

PC ZONE RECOMMENDED

One of the best sports sims around and still a favourite in the *PC Zone* office. The polygon graphics may be initially off-putting but the boxers move superbly, being based on videos of real boxers in action.

The game contains 50 pre-set boxers of variable degrees of unpleasantness but its great feature is that you have the ability to customise your own boxer. In 'Create Boxer' mode you can choose his height, weight, kit colour, what his face looks like and whether he's left or right handed. This all adds to your sense of involvement with your boxer.

There's also a gym where skills can be honed, although access to the gym is dependent on winning fights. As well as excellent gameplay, which even allows you to taunt your opponent with a series of gestures, there are nine (fully adjustable) camera angles and the option to view the fight through your boxer's eyes. Easily the best of Mindscape's 4D games, *4D Sports Boxing* cries out for a sequel.

SPORTS

Football, rugby et al might be exciting, thrilling even, but they're also far too much like hard work. Why run up the pitch when a program can do it for you?

ADVANTAGE TENNIS (Infogrames, £30.99)
Fairly playable tennis game with an unusual viewpoint which is surprisingly effective, and the ability to select a couple of special shots for your player.

ARCHER MACLEAN'S POOL (Virgin, £25.99)
The inevitable sequel to the award winning *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker* (see below), and as good a representation of pool as that was of snooker. In fact this is basically the same driver as the original so you probably wouldn't want both games but you'd certainly want one of them.

CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL (Addicitve, £4.99)
Pretty standard in format and very dated in style (CGA graphics) baseball game. Mind you for a fiver...

CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF (Addictive, £4.99)
Once more dated CGA graphics, but this time the gameplay doesn't even begin to redeem it. Eccentric rather than exciting, it probably seemed like a good idea at the time.

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER '93 (Domark, £29.99)
Update of last year's championship manager this, despite it's faults, is one of the best football management games around. Eschews any sort of graphic by representing the match by a series of bar graphs and a text commentary. However, the management section is far more satisfying with a wide range and depth of strategy missing from other games. On the downside this results in some very slow disk accessing. Another irritant is the list of match results which you have to sit through. Quick they ain't. For all this though, *Championship Manager '93* is an addictive game with long term appeal.

DAVID LEADBETTER'S GOLF (MicroProse, £44.99)
Goes nose to nose with *Links 386 Pro* as best golf game around. It scores in terms of accessibility, having a stronger arcade feel than *Links,* and works effectively on slower machines. However, the experts might find the power bar less than challenging, within a very short time you'll be racing through the ranks to scratch player. *David Leadbetter's Golf* is also woefully short of course disks. However it's still a decent contender for best of the bunch.

DISC (Digital Integration, £7.99)
Remember the arcade game *Tron Discs?* If you do then this will look more than a little familiar. Two futuristic discus throwers attempt to dislodge each other by hurling discs. A sort of 21st century pillow fight and not quite as much fun as it sounds.

THE DREAM TEAM (Ocean, £29.99)
Nothing to do with the film with Michael Keaton and a lot to do with basketball. Whoever the Dream Team are they're not playing in this seriously weak game with little to recommend it.

EARL WEAVER BASEBALL 2.0 (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
Playable as either a management or arcade game (or both) *Earl Weaver*, while being an extremely good game, does slightly fall between two stools. As a management game it has lost the ability to create your own teams (unless you buy an extra Commissioner's disk) this, plus the lack of team trading and other management features means that it is weak on the management side. On the arcade side it suffers from a slight jerkiness and slowness. Still, the chosen camera angles are good and it is fun to play. Good but not the best.

FOOTBALL MANAGER (Addictive, £2.99)
This is where it all started. One of the first football management games from the days when Babbage's Calculating Machine was regarded as the hottest hardware this side of the Roman road. Obviously it's all a bit dated now but what it does, it does very well and it still has a naggingly addictive playability that easily overcomes the complete lack of graphics. For less than three quid you can't really complain.

FRONT PAGE SPORTS FOOTBALL (Dynamix, £39.99)
The best of the American Football games, provided you've got a high spec PC. The animation is impressive but the real bonus is the open ended, free thinking, almost completely unfettered play editor.

THE GAMES – ESPANIA '92 (Ocean, £34.99)
Bog standard athletics compilation. Been there, done that and bought the ridiculously small shorts.

HARDBALL III (Accolade, £34.99)
Managing to combine a strong management game with the best arcade section of any of the current crop of baseball games (the pitching is outstanding). *Hardball III* is the best baseball game around. Bonuses include the ability to save at any stage of the season, and the sprite scaling so that fielders get smaller as they move into the outfield. Ooh, it's just like being there.

INTERNATIONAL ATHLETICS (Zeppelin, £9.99)
Even as a budget game this athletics sim is rather on the thin side. Whether you're participating in discus, hurdles, triple jump or sprint, the control system is virtually identical. Moreover there's no point to it all, you simply attempt to beat the qualifying time.

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY CHALLENGE (Domark, £34.99)
The World Cup and Five Nations tournament are both featured in this not entirely successful attempt to bring a *Kick Off* style of gameplay to the wonderful world of rugby. The challenge is mainly to do with working out who's got the ball.

ITALIA 90 (Virgin Games, £9.99)
To describe the World Cup tie in as tenuous is an understatement. Neither the teams nor the tournament system are from the World Cup. This is an arcade football game (complete with high score table) with the peculiar, and somewhat disorientating, novelty that when the action gets close to goal your perspective changes from sideways on to behind the keeper. Quite fun but no World Cup.

JACK NICKLAUS UNLIMITED GOLF AND COURSE DESIGN
(Accolade, £29.99)
The game itself is fairly average golfing fare but the course design option is excellent, allowing you to let your imagination run wild to the extent of designing your own objects. You can then write course and hole descriptions for Jack to pass on to new players. The only limit on your creativity is a parser which edits out rude words (as Dunc found when he tried to get Jack to describe the series of bunkers he'd designed spelling out the 'F' word – we're dead mature here). In the end the weaknesses of the golf model doesn't matter, you spend so much time designing the courses you hardly ever bother to play them. Course Disks (for the unimaginative) include:
- **JACK NICKLAUS COURSE DISK VOL. 4** (Accolade, £4.99)
- **JACK NICKLAUS COURSE DISK VOL. 5** (Accolade, £4.99)

JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER
(Virgin Games, £35.99)
This caused something of a stir when it was first released a couple of years ago. There'd been snooker games before but nothing quite like this. The 3D graphics, adjustable viewpoints and extremely accurate gameplay make this still by far and away the best snooker game available. Just like the real thing: beginners can happily whack the balls around the table, while experts can spend hours viewing and reviewing the angles to decide on the best shot. What really makes the game, of course, is that the balls pull faces at you if you delay too long over a shot.

JOE MONTANA FOOTBALL
(US Gold, £35.75)
A top notch American Football game the strength of which lies in its use of real teams in a full league season. The game also includes the increasingly common two player and replay options. The graphics, however, can be described as adequate rather than outstanding.

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL II (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
An improved interface and graphics on its predecessor and a very flexible custom play design system. But it has the same gameplay shortcomings as the original. Now looks more than a little dated.

JORDAN IN FLIGHT
(Electronic Arts, £39.99)
Although quite an enjoyable little number, *Jordan In Flight* is also an example of flash technology overshadowing fairly limited gameplay. The game is certainly a looker, the programmers used digitised images of Michael Jordan weaving his full range of basketball magic. The sort of programming usually associated with flight sims was used for full 3D movement and vectoring of players and playing area, plus unlimited viewing angles. However while the game looks good and plays reasonably well, despite the odd hitch, there is a lack of variety and/or challenge.

LINKS 386 PRO
(Access, £45.99)
In terms of Golf simulations this is quite simply the best golf game around. It feels like the real thing. Challenging and maybe not instantly playable, *Links* is not for those who just want a quick whack round the fairway (as the saying goes). It's hard, as hard as the real thing, and just as enjoyable. One warning though, *Links* is processor hungry.
Course Disks Include:
- **BARTON CREEK – CHAMPIONSHIP COURSE** (Access, £22.99)
- **BAY HILL CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP COURSE** (Access £22.99)
- **BOUNTIFUL** (Access, £22.99)
- **FIRESTONE** (Access £22.99)
- **HYATT DORADO BEACH** (Access, £22.99)
- **MAUNA KEA** (Access, £22.99)
- **PINEHURST – CHAMPIONSHIP COURSE** (Access, £22.99)

THE MANAGER
(US Gold, £30.99)
This runs Domark's *Championship Manager '93* pretty close for the title of best football management game, and for my money it just about pips it at the post. The management aspect may not be quite as detailed as in *Championship Manager '93* but the match display (a series of highlights) adds excitement and actually makes the management more realistic since you can base decisions on seeing people play.

MIKE DITKA ULTIMATE FOOTBALL
(Accolade, £34.99)
Now somewhat superseded by *Front Page Sports Football, Ditka* is no longer the ultimate American football game. However its range of custom options (create players, teams, outfits, leagues and even plays) and five viewpoints (four in replay) means it's still very playable.

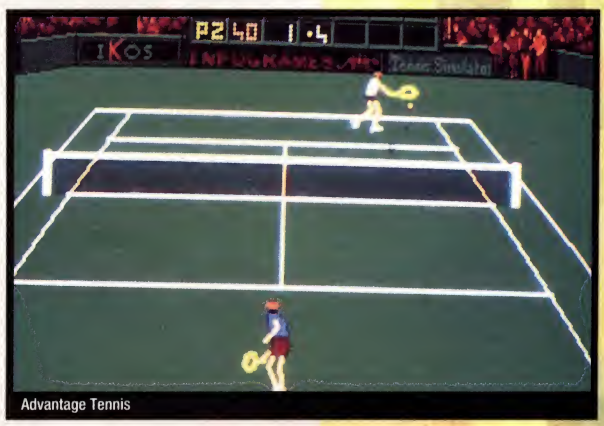
NFL FOOTBALL
(Konami, £39.99)
Another American football game, this time carrying the endorsement of the National Football League. Apart from that it differs very little from the one thousand and one other such games around.

PGA TOUR GOLF +
(Electronic Arts, £34.99)
The Ian Botham of golf games. In its time it was the best around: an outstanding performer. Now, however, it's beginning to show its age. However *PGA Tour* is still worth a look, especially if you've got a slow machine.
Course Disks Include:
- **PGA TOUR GOLD COURSE DISK** *(PGA Tour Data Disk, Windows Version)* (Electronic Arts, £15.99)
- **PGA TOUR GOLF COURSE DISK** *(PGA Tour Gold add-on)* (Electronic Arts, £14.99)

PGA TOUR GOLF (WINDOWS VERSION)
(Electronic Arts, £39.99)
Much the same as the non windows version apart from the small detail of not being as good (i.e. slower and with less colours).

PREMIER MANAGER
(Gremlin, £39.99)
A bit of a funny old one this. Very accessible football management sim in which you attempt to guide your Conference League team to the glories of the premier league (or ditch them along the way and take over a team with real prospects). Great fun at first, but eventually the simplicity which made the game so appealing initially gives it a rather thin feel. This combined with rather too many random misfortunes (How many times can a club be taxed/burgled in one year?) make it all a little frustrating. Good fun for a dabble but not enough there for the real buff.

PRO-TENNIS TOUR 2
(Addictive, £9.99)
One of the better tennis games, and at this price almost a bargain. The gameplay is initially challenging but worth persevering with (in fact not only do you improve with practice but so does your player). Plenty of options, plenty of action. Possibly the best tennis game for the PC.


Advantage Tennis

Earl Weaver Baseball

Front Page Sports Football

Hardball III

Jack Nicklaus Golf

Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker

Thel Manager

Winter Challenge

RUGBY COACH
(D&H Games, £9.99)
The world of management finally meets up with the world of Rugby (League and Union). No arcade section just management, making it the *Football Manager* of Rugby. Fine if you like that sort of thing.

SKI OR DIE
(Electronic Arts, £10.99)
Best described as a snowbound *California Games* with a collection of serious and not so serious winter sports. Quite playable in a budgety sort of way.

SUMMER OLYMPIAD
(Microvalue, £9.99)
Athletics sim of reasonable playability but little imagination. It's all been done before.

SUPER SKI
(Addictive, £2.99)
Sad and rather speccy type game with CGA graphics and poor collision detection. Outdated, to put it very politely.

TENNIS CUP II
(Loriciels, £29.99)
Reasonably playable tennis game with both tournament and exhibition mode. In its day *Tennis Cup* was one of the better tennis games but its day was sometime last week and that's beginning to show. Once you've played *Super Tennis* on the SNES this looks very primitive.

TONY LA RUSSA II
(SSI/US Gold, £35.99)
An exceptionally detailed baseball game which is strong in both the management and the arcade sections. It is crammed to overflowing with statistical information. Each batter, pitcher and fielder is rated in every imaginable category. There's also a data base of classic teams of the past to draw on for matches. Encouragingly the depth of the management section is not countered by weak gameplay. *Tony La Russa II* is as playable as it is manageable, although it is very memory hungry.

TRACKSUIT MANAGER
(Alternative, £7.99)
A fairly heavy football management game in which you manage the England squad. This game is unusual for including the international scene. It incorporates the statistics for the 1990/1991 season. Quite basic but, like many management games, compulsively playable.

TV SPORTS BASEBALL
(Mindscape, £19.99)
One of the more playable Baseball games with excellent pitching and batting and some good digitised sound samples to add to the atmosphere. Not wildly different to all the other baseball games around but it's perfectly adequate and reasonably priced.

TV SPORTS BOXING
(Mindscape, £19.99)
Uses digitised boxers to give it an impressive look. Unfortunately this is at the cost of anything approaching speed. Stick to *4D Sports Boxing*.

WAYNE GRETSKY 3
(US Gold, £30.99)
An improvement on its two predecessors but, despite some nice graphics touches and use of digitised sequences, *Wayne Gretsky 3* is still fairly flawed. The 'select player nearest the puck' is irritating, while without it anyone but the experienced player will be reduced to the role of spectator. This is a game for the enthusiast rather than the passer by.

WINTER CHALLENGE
(Accolade, £34.99)
Although following a fairly standard athletics formula, this is an extremely enjoyable game. The graphics and sound all add to the fun but what really makes it (in this office at least) is the ten player option. Friendships have ended on this game.

WINTER SUPERSPORTS '92 (Microvalue, £25.99)
Another bog standard athletics sport sim which is neither original, interesting or exciting.

WORLD CRICKET
(Zeppelin, £9.99)
Since you are reduced to spectator during the 'action' parts of the game it might be assumed that this is a strategy/management game. Strange then that the amount of strategy/management open to you is slim. Since you can never tell who is bowling, changes are simply guesswork. When you are batting you are not even able to decide whether to adopt a defensive or aggressive approach. This, combined with limited graphics, makes for a limited game. Yet for some reason I played it on and off for about a week.

WWF (Ocean, £9.99)
Rather limited grapple 'em-up aimed very much at the younger (and theoretically less critical) end of the market. Basically comes down to a 'whose quickest on the joystick waggle or button bash'. Would be better with more opponents and more moves.

WWF EUROPEAN RAMPAGE TOUR
(Ocean, £29.99)
More of the same, presumably due to follow *WWF* onto budget in the not too distant future.

MINI COMPO

4D SPORTS BOXING!

As you can see from the 'Game of the Month' review on the previous page, we think this game is fab. You can find out for yourself by winning our simple as a punch on the nose competition. Answer the question below and send the coupon to: **'Smack In The Mart', *PC Zone*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.** Seconds out, round one.

THE QUESTION

What was Mohammed Ali's original name?
a) Rocky Marciano
b) Cassius Clay
c) Cat Stevens

Competition closes 15 September.
Usual rules apply.

VERSIONWATCH

COMPANY	GAME	RELEASED	LATEST VERSION	DETAILS
Access	Amazon	Dec 92	?	Raft bug
Access	Countdown	Jan 91	?	General fix
Access	Links 386 Pro	Mar 93	?	General fix
Accolade	Elvira: Mistress of the Dark	Feb 91	1.2	General fix
Accolade	Grand Prix Unlimited	Apr 93	1.4	General fix
Accolade	Jack Nicklaus Signature Edition	Aug 91	1.51	General fix
Bethesda	Hockey League Simulator 2	Feb 93	1.11	General fix
Bethesda	Wayne Gretsky Hockey 3	Dec 92	1.1	General fix
CyberDreams	DarkSeed	Jan 93	1.5	General fix
Dynamix	A-10 Tank Killer 1.5	Mar 92	?	Joystick/mouse fix
Dynamix	Aces of the Pacific	Sep 92	1.2	General fix
Dynamix	Aces of the Pacific 1946 disk	Mar 93	?	General fix
Dynamix	Front Page Sports Football	Jan 93	?	Enhancements
Impressions	Air Bucks	Apr 93	1.2	General fix
Impressions	Caesar	May 93	?	General fix
Interplay	Bard's Tale Construction Set	Jul 92	1.3	General fix
Interplay	Battlechess II	Sep 91	?	General fix
Interplay	Buzz Aldrin's Race into Space	May 93	?	General fix
Interplay	Castles	Sep 91	?	General fix
LucasArts	Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis	May 93	?	486 fix
LucasArts	Indy Last Crusade: Graphic Adventure	Mar 92	?	486 SoundBlaster fix
LucasArts	Secret of Monkey Island	Jan 92	?	486 SoundBlaster fix
LucasArts	Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe	Feb 92	2.1	General fix
LucasArts	SWOTL P-38	Dec 91	?	Speed fix
LucasArts	Their Finest Hour – Battle of Britain	Mar 91	?	General/joystick calibration
LucasArts	X-Wing	May 93	?	Roland soundcard fix
LucasArts	X-Wing	May 93	?	Soundcard I/O fix
Maxis	A-Train	Apr 93	1.02	General fix
Maxis	Sim Earth	Feb 93	?	Installation routine fix
Maxis	SimLife	Feb 93	2	General fix
Merit	Maelstrom	Mar 93	1.1	General fix
Merit	Tom Landry Strategy Football	Mar 93	1.03	General fix
MicroProse	B17 Flying Fortress	Nov 92	2	General update
MicroProse	Civilisation	Oct 92	5	General fix
MicroProse	Command HQ	Feb 91	1.97	General fix
MicroProse	Darklands	Mar 93	7	General fix
MicroProse	F-15 III	Apr 93	3	General fix
MicroProse	F117A Stealth Fighter	Jan 93	4	General fix
MicroProse	Formula 1 Grand Prix	Apr 93	1.05	Modem update
MicroProse	Global Conquest	Apr 92	?	Modem update
MicroProse	Gunship 2000	Jan 92	6	General fix
MicroProse	Gunship 2000 Islands and Ice	Feb 93	85	General fix
MicroProse	Harrier Jump Jet	May 93	?	ThrustMaster fix
MicroProse	Knights of the Sky	May 91	4	General fix
MicroProse	Rex Nebular	Nov 92	8.49	General fix
MicroProse	Silent Service II	Mar 91	3	General fix
MicroProse	Task Force 1942	Feb 93	411x1.1	General fix
MicroProse	UMS 2	May 92	1.71	General fix
MicroProse	UMS 2 Planet Editor	Oct 92	1.6.6	General fix

COMPANY	GAME	RELEASED	LATEST VERSION	DETAILS
Mindcraft	Ambush at Sorinor	Jun 93	1.02	General fix
Mindcraft	Magic Candle II	May 92	2	General fix
Mindcraft	Magic Candle III	Feb 93	1.16	General fix
Mindcraft	Rules of Engagement	Feb 92	1.08	General fix
Mindcraft	Siege	Aug 92	1.2	General fix
Mindcraft	Star Legions	Jan 93	?	General fix
Mindcraft	Tegel's Mercenaries	Apr 93	1.2	General fix
New World	Might and Magic 4 – Clouds of Xeen	Oct 92	?	General fix
NovaLogic	Comanche: Maximum Overkill	Dec 92	1BB	General fix
Origin	Ultima Underworld	Feb 93	?	General fix
Origin	Ultima Underworld II	Feb 93	?	General fix
Origin	Ultima VII	Mar 93	3.4	General fix
Origin	Wing Commander: Special Operations 1	Feb 92	?	General fix
Paragon	Mantis	Mar 93	?	Floppy version fix
Paragon	MegaTraveller II	Nov 91	1.02	General fix
Paragon	Twilight 2000	Feb 93	?	'Colonel's update
Sierra	Island of Dr Brain	Dec 92	?	General fix
Sierra	Mixed Up Mother Goose MPC	Sep 92	?	SoundSource driver fix
Sierra	Police Quest 1	Sep 92	?	General fix
Sierra	Police Quest III	Oct 91	?	Mouse fix
Sierra	Quest For Glory I	Sep 92	?	VGA fix
Sierra	Quest For Glory III	Dec 92	B	General fix
Sierra	Space Quest IV	Mar 91	1.052	General fix
Sierra	Space Quest V	Feb 93	?	General fix
Sierra	Willy Beamish	Nov 91	?	General fix
Sir-Tech	Crusaders of the Dark Savant	May 93	2	General fix
Spectrum HB	Crisis in the Kremlin	Sep 92	1.01	General fix
Spectrum HB	Falcon 3.0	May 92	3.0d	General fix
Spectrum HB	Operation Fighting Tiger	Oct 92	3.01.1	General fix
Spectrum HB	Tank	Apr 91	1.1	General fix
SSI	Dark Queen of Krynn	Jun 92	?	Gameplay fix
SSI	Eye of the Beholder II	Jan 92	1.1	General fix
SSI	Great Naval Battles of the North Atlantic	Feb 93	1.2	General fix
SSI	Pacific War	Mar 93	1.0x10	General fix
SSI	Prophecy of the Shadow	Aug 92	1.1	SoundBlaster fix
SSI	Spelljammer	Nov 92	?	General fix
SSI	Tony Larussa 2	May 93	1.1	General fix
SSI	Tony Larussa Fantasy Manager	Mar 92	?	Stadiums disk bug fix
SSI	Ultimate Baseball	Jan 93	1.1	General fix
SSI	Unlimited Adventures	May 93	1.1	General fix
Three-Sixty	Harpoon	May 93	1.32A	General fix
Three-Sixty	Harpoon (386 version)	May 93	1.32A	General fix
Three-Sixty	Megafortress	Feb 92	?	General fix
Three-Sixty	V for Victory	May 93	3.1	General fix
Velocity	JetFighter II	Jun 91	?	General fix
Virgin	Deluxe Scrabble	May 91	?	General fix
Virgin	Dune II	Apr 93	?	General fix
Virgin	The Seventh Guest	May 93	?	General fix
White Wolf	Empire Deluxe	Apr 93	3.1	General fix
White Wolf	The Perfect General	Nov 91	1.02	General fix

Hello, good evening and welcome to VersionWatch, soon to become the most widely read list of the latest available versions of top PC games. *(It's the only one. Ed.)* The whole purpose is to highlight the fact that publishers do fix problems when they come across them; and to help you work out whether you have the latest, most bug-free version of a game. This list doesn't imply that all the games mentioned are bugged to buggery; some are small fixes accompanied by a whole range of improvements (for example the *Gunship 2000* upgrade to version 6). Each month we'll be adding in the latest hot fixes that can be obtained from the publishers (at a nominal charge or for free) or by downloading from bulletin boards or other on-line services.

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ATAC

RRP £44.99 • A multi-plane flight sim/strategy game that pits a squadron of F-22s and Apache gunships against Columbian drug cartels. Challenging and varied gameplay makes this the game *Strike Commander* should have been.

David Leadbetter's Golf

RRP £44.99 • This is the real heavyweight golf player's simulation. Forget the skin deep appeal of *Links 386 Pro* – this is the one that'll keep you up on Friday night after coming home from the pub with a posse in tow. For the connoisseur of sports simulations.

Railroad Tycoon

RRP £35.75 • This classic strategy game is Sid Meier's prequel to *Civilization*, voted unanimously† by the *PC Zone* editorial team as one of the most addictive build 'em-ups ever written. Construct a railroad empire and smoke large cigars, not necessarily in that order.

B-17 Flying Fortress

RRP £44.99 • The greatest bombing sim of all time! Take your personalised plane and crew on a tour of European landmarks. This stunning game has elements that'll appeal to any player: turret gunner, bombardier, navigator, you control them all.

Special Forces

RRP £44.99 • Sequel to the classic *Airborne Ranger*, *Special Forces* puts you in command of an elite team of crack troops. This difficult and unique squad-level combat game is a combination of action and strategy that requires quick thinking and careful planning.

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†Except for Duncan, who thinks it's a tropical wind simulator.

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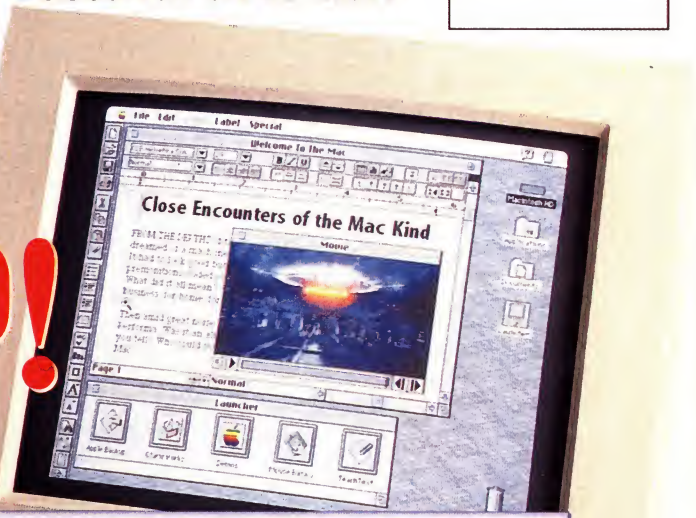

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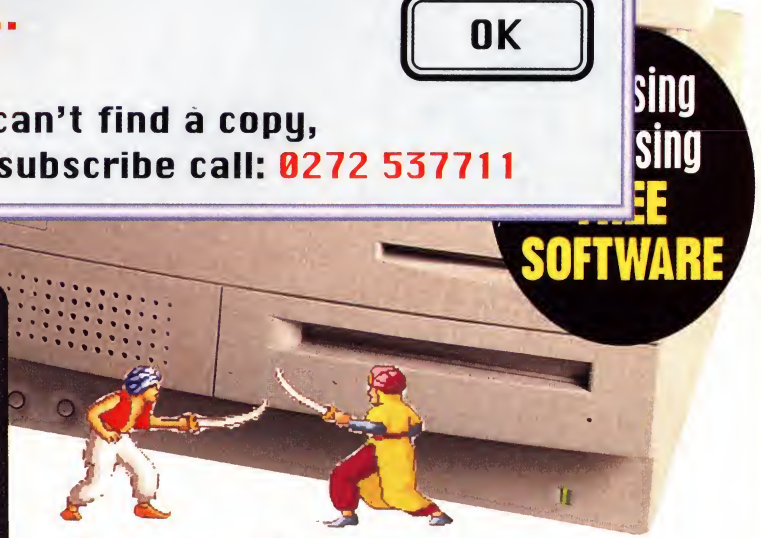


Games, Games, Games!

FREE Absolute Beginner's Guide With This Issue

Mr Cursor

HE'S AFRAID OF HIS PC (& SPIDERS)

MOST PEOPLE ARE afraid of DOS, which is fair enough. I, however, am afraid of Windows. Okay, so I'm afraid of DOS too, but at the moment it's Windows that has the edge. But *why* am I scared of Windows? After all, it's meant to represent the user-friendly side of PCs. Point'n'click 'friendly' interface; attractive 'friendly' icons; messages from the CPU in clear, 'friendly', 'how do you do old chum, what sort of multi-tasking jollities shall we engage in today?' fashion. Etcetera etcetera. But as far as I'm concerned Windows is *not* my friend. Its philanthropic posturing is merely that... a pose; a transparent attempt to deny the existence of DOS, which as we all know is only a single screen beneath it. And not only does Windows use a large chunk of vital hard drive 'game space', but it spreads itself around on installation without asking permission. It stuck its claws into my AUTOEXEC.BAT, for instance. And into my CONFIG.SYS too. The only reason I installed it in the first place was so that I could get Corel Draw! to work: but as far as Windows seemed to be concerned, *it* was the important thing. 'Sod his other stuff,' it doubtless said to itself in binary, or hex, or Martian or whatever, 'The main thing is that *I* will work brilliantly.' And it *did* work brilliantly. And so did Corel Draw!

But Microprose *Grand Prix* didn't work at all.

Nor did *Stunt Island.*

Nor did *Star Control 2.*

Nor did *Hong Kong Mah Jong Pro.*

Could this be Karmic retribution for shooting that little robin with my air pistol when I was nine? Or Windows? An installation error on my part? Or all down to Microsoft? William Hills would no doubt be happy to take wagers, and I think I can guess what their odds would be. *(Yes, like about evens that it was all your fault. Ed.)*

Anyway, I killed Windows. Or, to be more precise, I killed all references to it outside of its actual folder. Back in with my original AUTOEXEC.BAT. Back in with my original CONFIG.SYS. Death to all words beginning with W, ending in S and rhyming with, er, 'Bindows'. (See? There aren't even any words that rhyme with it... the work of the Devil, like an orange.) But no matter. Windows is now demoted, imprisoned within a bracketed buffer – sentenced by me and jailed by DOS.

But don't think me naive: I fully realise it will one day escape. By then, though, I will be ready for it.

But enough about Windows and onto the other thing I want to talk about this month... namely spiders. Now these things *really* scare the shit out of me, I don't mind telling you... and I think they should be eradicated, wiped from the face of the earth, every single last one; from the bird eaters all the way down to little red money spiders. I once said this to the insect and arachnid keeper at London Zoo, who was appalled. 'Balance of nature,' he fumed. 'Food chain,' he ranted. 'Vital,' he pointed out. 'Fascinating, noble creatures,' he gasped. He caught his breath, paused, and then bellowed: 'Illogical phobia, fed by extreme ignorance!'

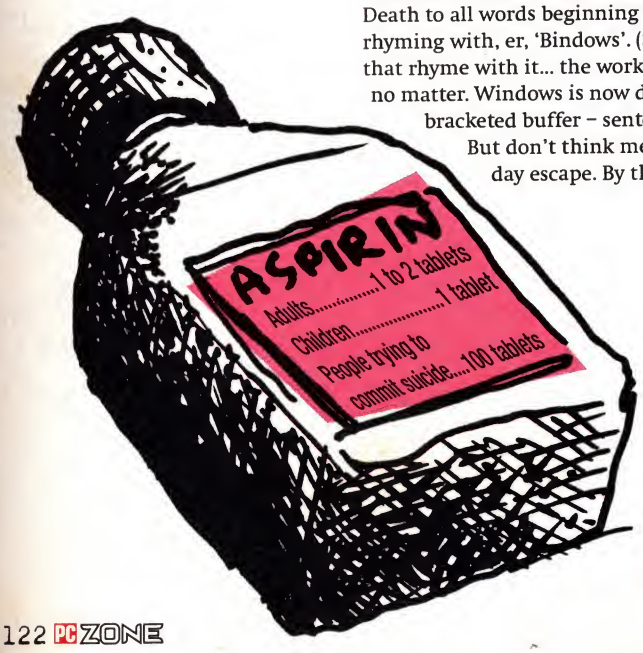
'But they're disgusting,' I replied, 'I still say they should all be killed.' The insect and arachnid keeper began clutching at straws. How would I feel if the mosquito population grew by 3000%, for instance? I told him that we could deal with that when the time came but that it wouldn't worry me anyway, because I lived in Surrey. 'How could anybody be afraid of a tiny money spider?' I explained that money spiders would, sooner or later, mutate into something unspeakable. 'What about the intricate beauty of the spider's web covered in dew, lost for all time simply because of base human fear and irrationality?' Nice try, so I told him the story of my friend Ian, a roofing contractor who once accidentally backed into a gigantic spider's nest while treating the rafters in the attic of a 19th century thatched cottage and who had been instantly covered, from head to toe, by frantic, panicking house spiders of varying size and repulsiveness. The shock, I continued, had caused Ian to fall through the ceiling and into the room beneath. No broken bones, thankfully, but he had been emotionally scarred, and was eventually forced to change jobs. I added, for effect, that Ian was now an ice cream man (which was untrue because he had actually committed suicide, but I felt being an ice cream man was somehow worse). The insect and arachnid keeper sympathised with Ian's plight, but was sticking to his guns. After 20 minutes we agreed to disagree.

Later that afternoon I visited the rhino enclosure. 'I think all rhinos should be exterminated,' I told the rhino keeper.

'Yes,' he said, 'The rhinoceros is a serious threat to mankind, and, as such, it must be 'removed'. It's why I have this job. I am an undercover agent, an infiltrator from the Anti Rhino League. My comrades are everywhere.'

Blimey. I was only joking.

(And I was only joking about Windows too... sort of).



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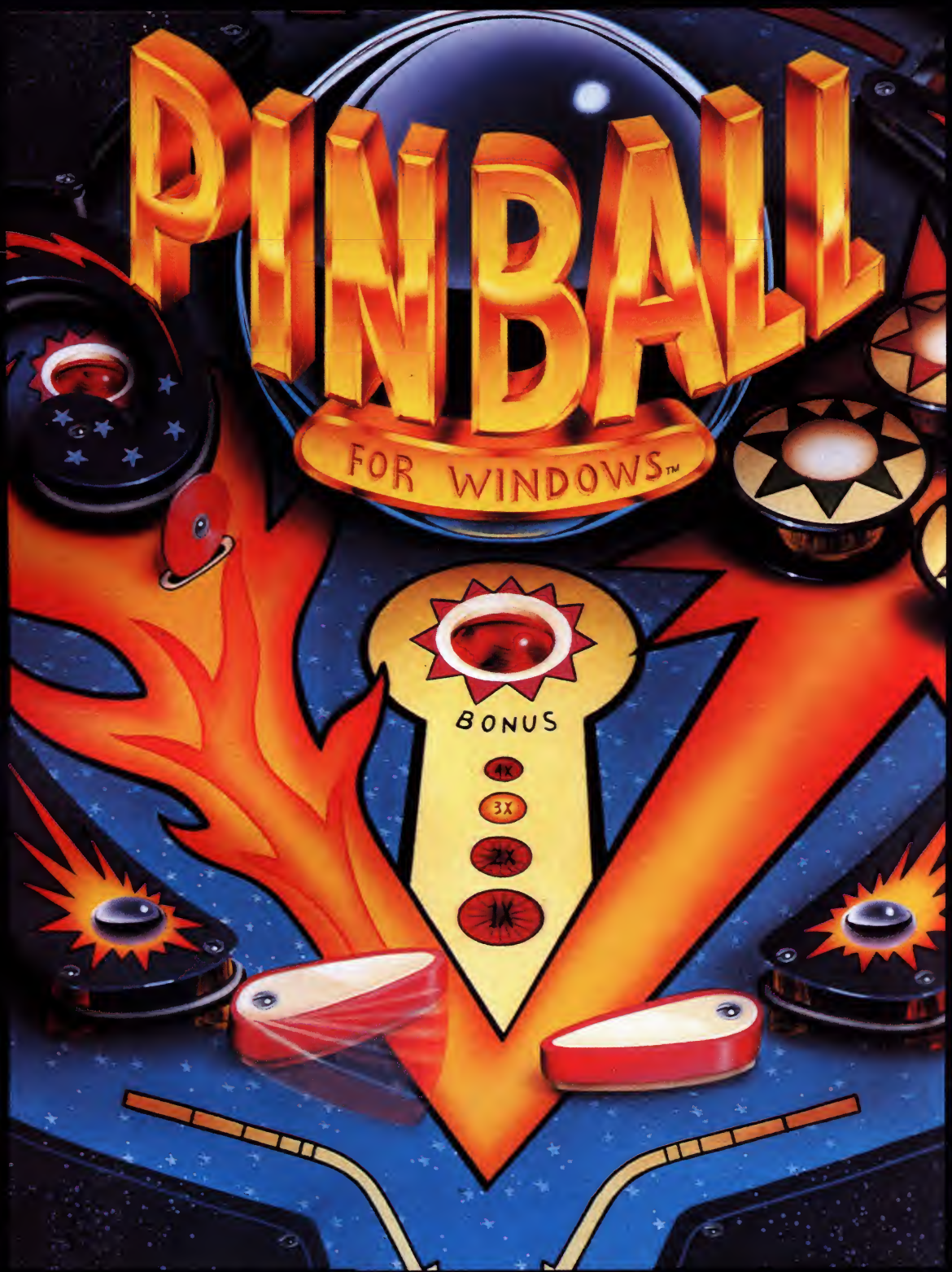

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